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ABSTRACT

This handbook is designed to provide parents and advocates with the information they need to take an active role in Chapter 1 programs. It contains 11 chapters. Chapters 1-4 are designed for anyone interested in learning more about the basic requirements of Chapter 1 law. Specifically, these chapters provide a brief overview of the law, explore the legal requirements, analyze the chronology of steps that school districts receiving Chapter 1 funds must follow, discuss the key rights of children in the Chapter 1 program, and describe parental involvement requirements of the law. Action-oriented strategies for those who want to improve Chapter 1 programs are contained in chapters 5 and 8 through 11. Chapter 6 describes the problems in the ways many schools are setting Chapter 1 goals, designing their programs, and evaluating students; it also suggests important directions for change within each of these areas. Appendices provide relevant laws, regulations, and guidelines; examples of Chapter 1 programs and parental involvement programs; a list of the Regional Technical Assistance Centers; and the special Chapter 1 programs operated by state agencies. (GLR)

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# CHAPTER 1 Advocacy Handbook

## Making the CHAPTER 1 Program Work in Your Schools

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UD 029 586

Jessica Levin

Center for Law and Education
*With the Participation of*
National Education Association
National Coalition of Title I/Chapter 1 Parents

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# CHAPTER 1 Advocacy Handbook

## Making the CHAPTER 1 Program Work in Your Schools

Jessica Levin

Center for Law and Education
*With the Participation of*
National Education Association
National Coalition of Title I/Chapter 1 Parents

This handbook was developed by the

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# CHAPTER 1 ADVOCACY HANDBOOK:
# Making The CHAPTER 1 Program Work in Your Schools

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# INTRODUCTION

## Why Parents and Advocates Must Take An Active Role in CHAPTER 1 Programs

Chapter 1 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act is the largest federal education program. It provides billions of dollars to school districts, based on the number of poor children they serve. The money is used by schools to provide extra services to the children who are farthest behind in school. The purpose of Chapter 1 is to help low-achieving, low-income students catch up with other students and succeed in school.

Although Chapter 1 (formerly called Title I) has existed for over twenty-five years, far-reaching amendments to the Chapter 1 law in 1988 increased its potential to improve the educational achievement of disadvantaged children. The law now requires that Chapter 1 programs are of high quality, that Chapter 1 students are not subject to lower expectations than other students, that programs that do not work are improved, and that parents play a major role in the design and implementation of the programs.

Chapter 1 can play a significant role in improving the basic educational program of low-income children. Chapter 1 also can serve as an important lever for school-wide change.

But Chapter 1 is not fulfilling its potential to improve the quality of education for low-income children. Many Chapter 1 programs are failing to meet both the requirements of the law and the needs of their students. Unfortunately, few parents and advocates are acting to address these failures.

Parents of children eligible for Chapter 1 services, and persons who are acting in place of a parent of these children, have a central role to play in the Chapter 1 program. The law says that they must be involved in the "planning, design, and implementation" of the program. They must receive "timely" information and get timely responses to their recommendations. They also must have more opportunities to be involved in their childrens' education at home and at school. Through this involvement, parents may become their children's most important advocates. However, parents frequently do not receive the information, training, and support they need to effectively play the roles spelled out in the Chapter 1 law.

Advocates of low-income parents and children also can play an important role in Chapter 1 -- in enforcing the law, representing the interests of parents, and working toward more effective Chapter 1 programs.

## About This Handbook

This handbook is designed to provide parents and advocates with the information they need to take an active role in Chapter 1 programs. Its eleven chapters contain the following:

I. Responses to commonly asked questions about Chapter 1.

II. A description of how Chapter 1 works, including the process school systems must follow in order to receive Chapter 1 funds.

III. A summary of the key rights of Chapter 1 children, including questions parents can ask to determine whether these rights are being violated.

IV. A summary of the key rights of parents of Chapter 1 children.

V. Suggestions for parents on how to make the most of their rights to be involved.

VI. A discussion on how to improve local Chapter 1 programs. This section explores three central areas: (a) how school districts set goals for the Chapter 1 program; (b) the ways Chapter 1 programs are designed; and (c) how Chapter 1 programs are evaluated.

VII. Checklists of things that may be going wrong with Chapter 1 programs.

VIII. Suggestions for what to do to correct specific Chapter 1 problems or violations.

IX. A discussion of the steps that can be taken to initiate longer-term Chapter 1 advocacy efforts to improve the overall Chapter 1 program.

X. A list of organizations and resources that parents can turn to for help.

XI. How advocates can reach and assist parents.

Legislators and policy makers have begun to discuss how the Chapter 1 law can be improved. This handbook's focus on educational quality and how to ensure high levels of achievement by Chapter 1 students goes to the heart of these discussions. The information on these issues, and on effective advocacy, will remain useful even when a new Chapter 1 law takes effect in a few years.

## How to Use This Handbook

### *Requirements of the Chapter 1 Law*

*Chapters I-IV* of this handbook are designed for anyone interested in learning more about the basic requirements of Chapter 1 law. The first chapter provides a brief overview of the law; the next three chapters explore the legal requirements in greater detail. *Chapter II* analyzes the chronology of steps that school districts that receive Chapter 1 funds must follow, and *Chapter III* describes the key rights of children in the Chapter 1 program. The third chapter also provides questions for parents to ask in order to learn more about their school's Chapter 1 programs. The parental involvement requirements of the law are described in *Chapter IV*.

All of the material in the first four chapters of this handbook is particularly appropriate to copy and distribute to a wide range of audiences, or use for training people about Chapter 1.

### *Key Education Issues*

For those who want to learn more about underlying education issues that are at the heart of Chapter 1 reform, *Chapter VI* may be a useful starting point. It describes the problems with the way many schools are setting Chapter 1 goals, designing their programs, and evaluating students; it also suggests important directions for change within each of these areas. *Appendix B* complements this chapter by presenting real examples of strong and weak Chapter 1 programs and parental involvement programs.

### *Involvement and Action Strategies*

Action-oriented strategies for those who want to improve Chapter 1 programs are contained in *Chapter V* and *Chapters VIII-XI*. For parents interested in becoming more involved, and creating and maintaining strong parental involvement, *Chapter V* provides additional suggestions. In some communities, parents, with the help of advocates, will want to mobilize to address specific Chapter 1 problems when they arise. Other communities may or may not have identified a specific problem, but may be ready to initiate a longer term effort to improve the overall quality of their Chapter 1 programs. *Chapter VIII* suggests possible strategies for the first situation, and *Chapter IX* for the second. *Chapter IX* will be especially helpful to members of the Center for Law and Education's National Chapter 1 Advocacy Project and others who are interested in learning more about the specific steps they can take to launch their Chapter 1 advocacy efforts.

To carry out these efforts, parents and advocates frequently will need to reach and assist each other. *Chapter X* is designed for parents interested in obtaining outside help for their efforts; *Chapter XI* offers suggestions to advocates about how to reach and assist parents.

## What The "Chapter 1 Law" Includes

The legal requirements for operating Chapter 1 programs are spelled out in the Chapter 1 statute (the "law"). They are further explained and interpreted in key documents, including the legislative history written by Congress (the Conference Report, House Report, and Senate Report); the Chapter 1 regulations issued by the U.S. Department of Education; and the Department of Education's Chapter 1 Policy Manual. *Appendix A* provides the full citation for each of these documents.

## Support Services Available

The Center for Law and Education, through its National Chapter 1 Advocacy Project, can provide the support needed by local legal services programs, other advocates, and parents to initiate Chapter 1 advocacy efforts -- including phone consultations, additional materials, and training [1875 Connecticut Avenue, NW, Suite 510, Washington, DC 20009, (202) 986-3000]. Parents may also obtain assistance from the National Coalition of Title I/Chapter 1 Parents, Edmonds School Building, 9th & D Streets, NE, Washington, DC 20002, (202) 547-9286.

## Copies of This Handbook

Please feel free to copy any portion of this handbook, provided that you distribute the copies free of charge and give proper credit to the Center for Law and Education. Spanish versions of some sections are being prepared. Contact the Center for Law and Education for more information.

*Chapter 1 parents* may request a copy of this handbook from the National Coalition of Title I/Chapter 1 Parents (NCTIC1P)(see address above).

Copies of this handbook are available from either the NCTIC1P (see address and telephone number above) or the Center for Law and Education, 955 Massachusetts Avenue, Cambridge, MA 02139, (617) 876-6611. The Center for Law and Education provides free materials to staff members of legal services programs, low-income community organizations, and other advocates who provide free legal representation to low-income people. Prices for other persons and institutions are:

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# I ■ GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT CHAPTER 1

**(1) What is Chapter 1?**

Chapter 1 is the largest federal aid program for elementary and secondary schools. Once known as "Title I" of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, it was renamed "Chapter 1" in 1981. In 1988, Chapter 1 was amended by the Hawkins-Stafford Elementary and Secondary School Improvement Amendments of 1988. It will be reconsidered by Congress in 1993.

Chapter 1 provides money to school districts around the country based on how many low-income children they serve. Each school district must use its Chapter 1 funds to pay for *extra educational services* for children who are most behind in school. Chapter 1's purpose is to help the lowest achieving students succeed in the regular school program and learn the important skills that a school district wants *all* children to learn.

**(2) Which schools receive money?**

The amount of dollars given to each school district depends on the number of low-income children it has. Each school district then usually targets the money on those schools with the highest concentrations of low-income students. Nationwide, approximately 75% of all public elementary schools, 50% of all public middle schools, and 25% of all public high schools receive Chapter 1 funds.

**(3) Which students benefit from Chapter 1?**

In choosing which individual students to help with Chapter 1, schools must look at levels of achievement, *not* family income. Most schools can only spend Chapter 1 money on the students who need it most -- those furthest behind their classmates in school. Each school community identifies its lowest achieving students and decides how it will spend its Chapter 1 money.

**(4) Can Chapter 1 money ever be used to benefit all students in a school?**

Usually a school can only spend its Chapter 1 money on services for its lowest achieving students. However, Chapter 1 funds can be used to benefit all students in a school if 75% or more of the students in the school are low-income. Then a school qualifies for "schoolwide" status and can develop "schoolwide programs" to "upgrade the entire educational program in that school."

**(5) Who is in charge of developing and implementing Chapter 1 programs?**

The school district, principals, teachers, and parents all must be involved in developing and implementing the Chapter 1 programs.

**(6) How can Chapter 1 money be spent?**

Under law, Chapter 1 money can be spent in an enormous number of ways. The major restrictions are: the money must provide services for the lowest achieving students; these services must be over and above what these students would receive without the program; and these services must adequately raise the achievement levels of these students.

Many schools now use Chapter 1 funds to hire special teachers, aides, and tutors to work with Chapter 1 children on reading and math outside of the regular classroom. But schools can spend their Chapter 1 money in many other ways, such as after-school, weekend, or summer school programs; extra help within the regular classroom; help in other subjects; training and support of teachers and staff; and new forms of curriculum and instruction. In addition, Chapter 1 funds must pay for the parental involvement program, including the training of parents and support for their activities. Schools with schoolwide projects can also use Chapter 1 funds for overall school improvement or school restructuring efforts.

**(7) What are ways that the money cannot be used?**

Chapter 1 money is supposed to provide *extra* help to Chapter 1 students. Therefore, a school cannot spend its Chapter 1 money on a program that replaces another program, or on a program that it would have paid for anyway with local funds if it did not have Chapter 1 money. If they do this, it is called "supplanting." In addition, except in "schoolwide projects," a district cannot use Chapter 1 money as an aid for all students, including those whose achievement is adequate. This improper use of money is called "general aid."

**(8) Do Chapter 1 programs need to show results?**

Yes. In its application, each school district must state "desired outcomes" for its Chapter 1 programs in terms of "basic and more advanced skills that all children are expected to master." These desired outcomes *cannot* simply be higher test scores. Each year, Chapter 1 programs must help Chapter 1 children make substantial progress toward achieving the desired outcomes. If the programs are not working, the schools must take steps to improve them.

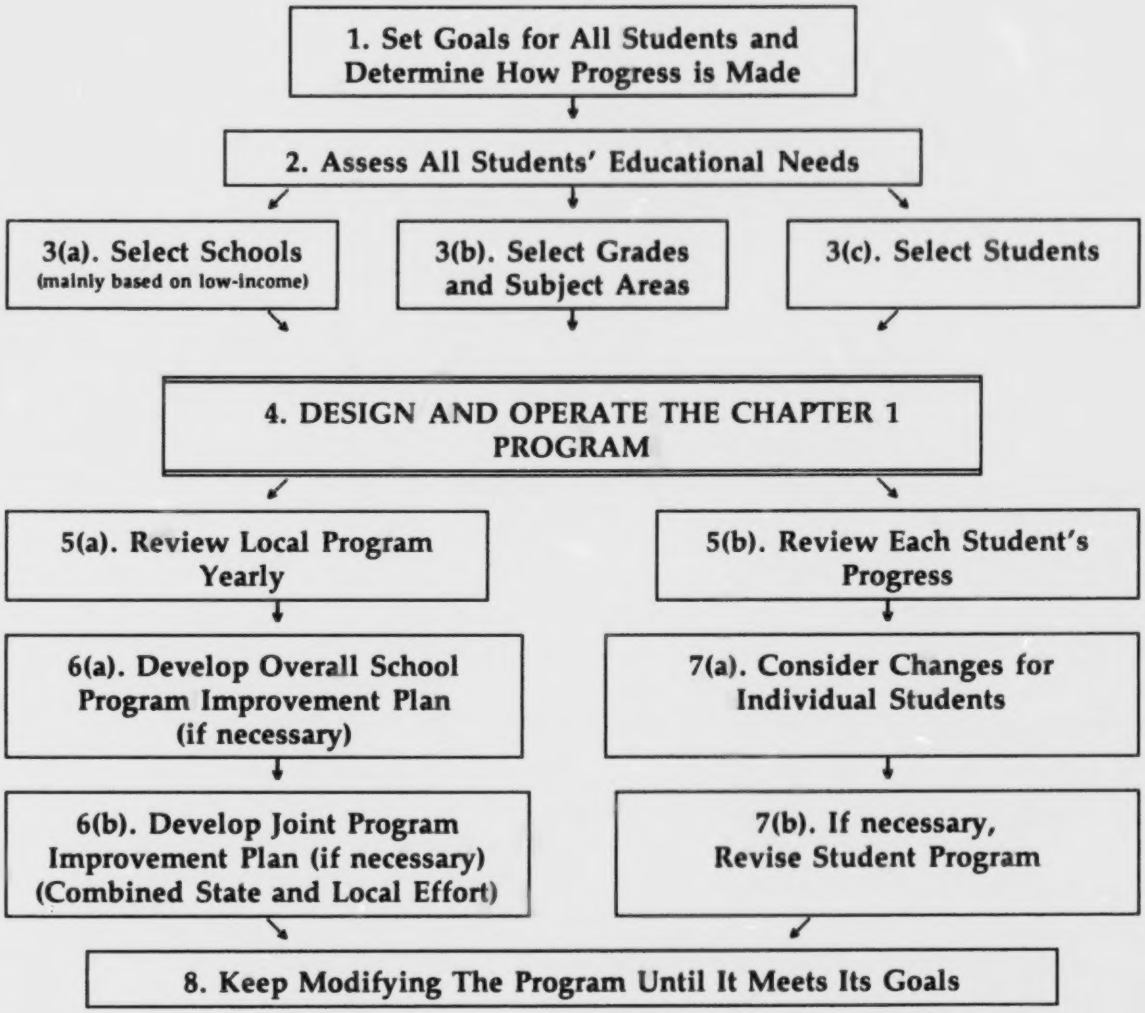
**(9) What is the role of Chapter 1 parents?**

Parents must be involved in designing and developing the Chapter 1 programs, including judging how well the programs are doing, and figuring out how to improve them, if necessary. They must receive sufficient information and training to become involved. They must be able to make recommendations and receive "timely response" to their recommendations. In addition, parents must be able to meet with school staff, observe school activities, and receive enough support from schools to be able to work with their children at home.

# II ▪ HOW CHAPTER 1 WORKS

## A. SUMMARY AND CHART OF KEY STEPS

The school district has the authority to make most of the decisions about the Chapter 1 program. However, it must involve teachers and parents in all of these decisions. In the law, the school district is called the Local Education Agency (LEA). To receive Chapter 1 funds, the LEA must *prepare an application* which the State Education Agency (SEA) must approve. The application, which can cover a period of three years, must describe the steps the district will take to operate a strong and lawful Chapter 1 program. These steps include developing the Chapter 1 program, operating it, evaluating it, and improving it where necessary. The chart below shows these steps, and the rest of the chapter provides more detail about each of them. Chapter IV describes the parental involvement requirements of the law.


1. Set Goals for All Students and Determine How Progress is Made
2. Assess All Students' Educational Needs
3(a). Select Schools (mainly based on low-income)
3(b). Select Grades and Subject Areas
3(c). Select Students
4. DESIGN AND OPERATE THE CHAPTER 1 PROGRAM
5(a). Review Local Program Yearly
5(b). Review Each Student's Progress
6(a). Develop Overall School Program Improvement Plan (if necessary)
7(a). Consider Changes for Individual Students
6(b). Develop Joint Program Improvement Plan (if necessary) (Combined State and Local Effort)
7(b). If necessary, Revise Student Program
8. Keep Modifying The Program Until It Meets Its Goals

## B. THE STEPS

### 1. SET DESIRED OUTCOMES/LOCAL STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT GOALS

At the heart of the 1988 amendments to Chapter 1 is the requirement that each school district establish desired outcomes for the Chapter 1 program. According to Section 1012(b), each local school district must state in its application "... the desired outcomes for eligible children, in terms of basic and more advanced skills that all children are expected to master...."

This is one of the most important requirements of the Chapter 1 law. This means that before even determining the content of its Chapter 1 program, a school district must figure out its *local goals* for *all* of its students. These goals must, in turn, become the desired outcomes for the children in its Chapter 1 program. In fact, a school district is not even supposed to receive Chapter 1 money until it -- along with the schools and parents -- determines what it wants its students to gain from these programs.

Setting goals requires two steps. First, a school district decides what "basic and advanced skills" it wants *all* students in the district to learn. The law defines *advanced skills* as "skills including reasoning, analysis, interpretation, problem-solving, and decisionmaking as they relate to the particular subjects in which instruction is provided under programs" supported by Chapter 1.

Second, once a district has defined these skills, it must decide how it will see if Chapter 1 students are making progress in learning them. The law requires Chapter 1 students to make "*substantial progress*" toward learning these skills each year. Therefore, the district also must decide what progress each year is enough to be called "substantial."

Realize that test scores are not skills, and so they cannot form the basis of the desired outcomes. Therefore, it would be inappropriate for a school district to set as a desired outcome "an increase in the reading test scores of Chapter 1 children by *x* points." Instead, a district must always first decide what it wants all its students to know and be able to do -- that is what skills they should learn -- and set these as the desired outcomes for the Chapter 1 program.

Identifying the skills that LEAs, parents, and teachers want all children to learn must always be the first step of the Chapter 1 process. The reason is that all the next steps ultimately depend on the proper identification of these skills -- students should be *selected* for the program based on the difficulty they are having in meeting the "desired outcomes;" the program should be *designed* to help the lowest achieving students to reach those "desired outcomes;" the program should be *evaluated* based on how much it is helping students achieve the "desired outcomes;" and program *improvement* activities will be required when a particular school or particular student is not achieving those "desired outcomes." Therefore, the success of the Chapter 1 program depends in part on the proper identification of the desired outcomes in terms of the "basic and more advanced skills that all children are expected to master."

### *A Note on "Skills"*

When the Chapter 1 law uses the term "skills," it is not using it only in the narrow sense of discrete, mechanical abilities taught out of context -- such as math computations, vocabulary, phonics, and decoding skills. "Skills" should be understood in the broadest sense of what children should know and be able to do at particular points in their schooling. "Skills" obviously include those mechanics that children need to know to be able to solve real problems, make decisions, reason, and strategize. The skills must also directly involve these higher order processes.

The law calls these higher order processes "advanced skills." "Advanced skills" are not simply the reading comprehension, and the math concepts and applications sections of a standardized test. They are also not simply problem solving, reasoning, and analysis skills broken down into so many bits and pieces that the whole learner is lost sight of, as well as his or her strengths and potential. The law means precisely the type of understanding, reasoning, thinking, and communication abilities that enable a student to solve new problems, understand and create meaning in new contexts, and become active readers, writers, thinkers, and participants in school and beyond.

## 2. ASSESS ALL STUDENTS' EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

After setting its desired outcomes, each year a local school district must assess every child in the school system in relation to these desired outcomes. Section 1014 of the law calls this the "assessment of educational need." The purpose of this assessment is to figure out how well *all* kids are doing in meeting the goals that the district has set.

The student assessment should enable the district to identify the students that are having the hardest time meeting the district's goals. The district can also use this information to determine the subject areas and skill areas in which these students are having the greatest difficulty.

## 3. SELECT SCHOOLS, GRADES, INSTRUCTIONAL AREAS, AND STUDENTS

### a. Select Schools

According to Section 1013 of the law, the district must conduct Chapter 1 programs in the schools that have high concentrations of children from low-income families. If the district does not have enough funds to effectively serve all eligible schools, it must rank its schools from poorest to wealthiest. Then it must decide in rank order the number of schools it can effectively serve. A district can give Chapter 1 funds to a school only if it gives funds to all schools that have a higher concentration of low-income children.

Section 1013(b), however, does give school districts some options. For example, they can serve any school in which at least 25% of the children are low-income; they can skip over schools that are receiving funds similar to Chapter 1 from their states; or they can choose to continue serving schools that were served in the previous year.

In selecting the schools to serve, the school district cannot spread its Chapter 1 resources too thinly. In fact, Section 1012(b)(3) of the law requires that Chapter 1 projects be of "sufficient size, scope, and quality to give reasonable promise of substantial progress toward meeting the special educational needs of the children being served." One important aspect of this is that Chapter 1 funds must be concentrated enough to actually make a substantial difference in student achievement. The district cannot select to serve more schools than can substantially benefit from the funds available.

### b. Select Grades and Instructional Areas

Within these schools, exactly which grades and subject areas should receive services must be guided by the assessment of the educational needs of the students. The district must focus extra resources on those grades and subjects in which the Chapter 1 eligible students are having the greatest difficulty meeting the desired outcomes -- the "basic and more advanced skills that all children are expected to master."

The district can vary, from school to school, the grades and subject areas in which it provides services. In fact, it is encouraged to do so. Its choices, however, must make sense in terms of where students are, and are not, meeting the goals set by the district.

### c. Select Students to Receive Chapter 1 Assistance

After selecting the schools, grades, and subject areas to serve, the district selects which students will participate in the program. Section 1014 requires these students to be the lowest achieving students in the school, and thus in greatest need of special assistance. Since the district already should have determined each student's mastery of the basic and more advanced skills, it can focus the program on those students who are having the hardest time mastering these skills.

Students with disabilities and limited English proficient (LEP) students must also benefit from Chapter 1 services, as long as they "have needs stemming from educational deprivation and not related solely to the disabling condition or limited English proficiency." This means that these children must receive Chapter 1 services if the standard services for LEP or disabilities still would not solve their educational problems, without additional educational services as well.

Low-achieving private school students who live in communities that have Chapter 1 projects also must receive Chapter 1 services.

The school district cannot serve more children -- just as it cannot serve more schools -- than can be substantially helped with the funds it has.

## 4. DESIGN AND OPERATE THE CHAPTER 1 PROGRAM

### a. Determine the Specific Needs of Selected Students

After selecting the children to be served, the district must determine their specific educational needs. If the district has already properly identified the skills expected of all children, it can now pinpoint the specific skills that are posing difficulty for students selected for the program.

The district must then design -- with the input of parents and teachers -- the program to address these needs. Services can differ from student to student to better help each one learn the skills which the district, and parents, have decided all students should learn.

### b. Activities Allowed by Law

Currently, most Chapter 1 funds are used by elementary schools to provide extra reading and math instruction for Chapter 1 children during the regular class time in another room. But a school can spend Chapter 1 money in an enormous number of ways. Section 1011 of the law says Chapter 1 can fund programs and projects:

- **in a wide variety of subjects**, in addition to reading and math;

- **at any grade**, including preschool, elementary school, middle and junior high schools, and high school;

- **at a wide variety of times**, in addition to the regular school day. These times can include before or after the school day, during the weekend or the summer, at school, or someplace else (for example, at a "drop-in" education room at a housing project);

- **for many different purchases**, including staff, books, equipment, materials (for example, for students to use at home), or the construction of a place to provide the Chapter 1 program, if necessary;

- **on hiring many different types of staff**, including special teachers, aides, and also counseling and guidance personnel;

- **on staff training**, for Chapter 1 staff and also regular teachers, principals, and even superintendents so they are better prepared to help children in need of special assistance;

- **on the parental involvement program**, including reasonable support for parental involvement activities. This support may include training, copying and distribution of materials, access to meeting space, transportation, modest refreshments, and babysitting;

- **on health, social, and nutritional services**, if these services are not available from other sources.

Nevertheless, although school districts have a lot of freedom in choosing the ways they will spend their Chapter 1 money, their choices also must be based on the real educational needs of the lowest achieving students. They must provide the type of extra services that will enable these students to catch up and keep up with the other children in the school.

### c. Schoolwide Programs

A Chapter 1 program usually helps only the low-achieving students in a school. However, according to Section 1015 of the Chapter 1 law, if 75%

or more of the children in a school are from low-income families, a school can use its Chapter 1 funds to benefit all children in the school. This is called a "schoolwide project." A schoolwide project includes activities to improve the overall instructional program in a school, not just to supplement the regular program of the lowest achieving students.

Schools with schoolwide projects, though, must still ensure that the low-achieving students are making as much progress as other students in the school. In addition, after three years of a schoolwide project, a school must also demonstrate that the achievement level of the educationally deprived children exceeds either the average achievement of the Chapter 1 children district-wide, or of such children in that school in the three years before the schoolwide project began.

If a local school district wants a school to have a schoolwide project, it must develop a plan with the help of parents, all types of staff, and students (if the school is a secondary school). This plan, if approved by the state, operates for three years, but can continue for three more years if students make enough progress.

### d. Coordination with the Regular Program

Section 1012(b) of the law also requires that each local school system allocate time and resources "for frequent and regular coordination of the [Chapter 1] curriculum ... with the regular instructional program." On the most basic level, this requirement means that regular teachers and Chapter 1 staff must plan both programs together and frequently meet to coordinate their objectives and lesson plans. They must also try to integrate the programs as much as possible.

However, this "coordination" requirement has even greater significance. It can also be used to attack problems in the regular program itself, including the tracking of students and ability grouping so commonly found in Chapter 1 schools. The House Report explains what legislators had in mind when they wrote this requirement.

> This coordination is a two-way street. While Chapter 1 should be structured in a way that does not detract from and in fact fits smoothly into the regular program, LEAs should also examine which aspects of the regular program may be facilitating or frustrating the success of Chapter 1 children.

And as Congressman Charles Hayes (D-Ohio), in his floor statement on the bill, pointed out:

> Many times minority and poor children, those often served by Chapter 1, are most at risk of being placed in lower tracks of the regular program, misclassified, given a watered-down curriculum, and held to lower expectations than their peers .... Chapter 1 will mean that schools will have to examine the Chapter 1 students' regular program and modify any features, including grouping practices, which may be frustrating achievement of the overall Chapter 1 goals.

The Chapter 1 law requires other types of coordination as well. Schools must coordinate the services provided under Chapter 1 and programs designed to address children's disabilities or limited English proficiency (LEP). This can be done through such activities as team meetings, sharing of needs assessment information, and using special education and LEP teachers to work part of their time with Chapter 1 children (with salaries paid by both programs on a *pro rata* basis).

## 5. ANNUAL REVIEW AND EVALUATION

### a. Review Local Program Yearly

Local school districts must determine if their Chapter 1 programs are meeting the goals for students. Each year, according to Section 1021 of the law, they must conduct an "annual review" of the Chapter 1 program's effectiveness in improving student performance. They must also conduct and report on an "evaluation" to the state at least once every three years.

Through these reviews, the district must identify those schools that are not making "substantial progress" in meeting the goals that the district set for its students. They must also identify any school in which the overall performance (defined in the law as the "aggregate performance") of its students is not improving. In explaining the meaning of "substantial progress," Senator Paul Simon (D-Illinois) in his floor statement stated:

> I would like to be sure the record is clear about the "substantial progress" phrase in terms of meeting the desired outcomes. That term means enough annual progress in each of the three years of the program to achieve those outcomes by the end of the 3-year cycle contemplated under program improvement. Obviously, some situations may take longer and the statute recognizes this possibility. Thus, children would be closing the gap between their current skills levels

and those expected for all children of their age or grade level at a pace of one-third each year.

School districts must also review Chapter 1 students' performance in the regular school program at least once every three years. This review can show whether the Chapter 1 program is achieving its ultimate purpose -- success for the Chapter 1 students in the regular program.

### b. Review Each Student's Progress

The district must also use the information from these reviews to evaluate *each student's* progress. They must identify specific students who have been in the Chapter 1 program for one year and have not met the standards that the district has set (substantial progress toward meeting the desired outcomes).

## 6. PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT

### a. Develop School Program Improvement Plan (if necessary)

Section 1021 of the Chapter 1 law now sets up a process that a school must follow if its Chapter 1 program is not helping the students meet the desired outcomes. This process is called "program improvement." The local school district in coordination with the school must develop and implement a program improvement plan. This plan specifies how the school will change its Chapter 1 program to make it better. The school then changes the Chapter 1 program based on the plan. The program improvement process makes sure that children do not remain year after year in Chapter 1 programs that are not working.

*When a school must begin program improvement:*

The law describes two situations in which a school would need to begin program improvement activities. (These two situations also apply to schoolwide projects.)

1) The school shows "no improvement or a decline in aggregate performance of children served ... for one school year ...";

or

> 2) The school does not show "substantial progress toward meeting the desired outcomes described in the LEA's application ...."

These are two separate requirements, and a school must satisfy both. The first is a minimal requirement -- it usually relies on test scores and requires program improvement only if a school does not show *any* gain in the total test scores (i.e., aggregate performance) of Chapter 1 children as compared with other children.

The second requirement, however, is much broader. It depends on the extent Chapter 1 children are learning the skills that all children must learn. This requirement recognizes that the test scores of Chapter 1 children may be rising (thereby satisfying requirement one), but that the children still may not be learning the skills they need to learn. Or the children may be learning these skills through the Chapter 1 program, but at a rate so slow that they would never be able to catch up with their classmates. In these situations, the school must develop a program improvement plan.

*How the programs must be changed:*

The school district -- with parent and school involvement -- must focus program improvement efforts on those grades and subject areas in which Chapter 1 children are failing to meet the district's achievement goals. And they must make those program changes which "have the greatest likelihood of improving the performance of the educationally disadvantaged children ...."

Many schools use program improvement to make minor changes in their Chapter 1 programs. These changes might cover staffing issues, training, materials, equipment, facilities, or parental involvement. Nonetheless, schools can (and should be encouraged to) use the program improvement process to reassess and fundamentally redesign their Chapter 1 programs, if necessary. The program improvement plan can specify a technical assistance provider to assist in these efforts. The state also may provide additional funds for the improvement process.

*The time frame for changing programs:*

Local school districts must begin program improvement activities "as soon as the school has been identified as being in need of improvement." Therefore, if a district determines the need for program improvement in the spring of one year, it should begin to plan and implement program improvement activities during the summer and fall (or, if necessary, the winter) that immediately follow.

The Chapter 1 regulations require that the plan be implemented "as soon as possible," although they do allow the school districts to have one full year of planning time before implementing a program improvement plan. Nonetheless, the Chapter 1 Policy Manual -- put out by the Department of Education to clarify the law -- emphasizes that one full year of planning is "the outside time limit for full implementation." Only when a school is using the program improvement process for a major change in its program -- for example from a pull-out project to a schoolwide project -- should it use the maximum planning time of a full year.

### b. Develop Joint Local-State Program Improvement Plan (if necessary)

If the program improvement plan has been in place for one year, and the school operating under the plan still does not make substantial progress toward meeting the desired outcomes, state officials now must join local officials -- and school staff and parents -- in developing a new plan. This new plan, called a "joint program improvement plan," describes the new changes that must be made in a school. The state *must* provide extra money to help with these changes.

Again, the local school district must put in place as quickly as possible those changes that can be made, and implement the full plan as soon as possible. Although the regulations allow the schools a year of planning time, this is the maximum time allowable and should be used only when the improvements will be complex and far-reaching. The joint plan must be reviewed and revised until acceptable improvement lasts for a period of more than twelve months.

## 7. STUDENT PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT

### a. Consider Changes for Individual Students

A school district has to make sure its Chapter 1 programs are working for students as a whole. It also must use its evaluation to make sure that individual students who have been served for one year are meeting the goals that it has set.

According to Section 1021(f), if a student has been in the Chapter 1 program for a year and has not made "substantial progress" toward meeting the desired outcomes, the school, with parent input, must consider changes in the program to better help the individual student. This is true even if the student attends a school that has not been identified as needing program improvement.

### b. If Necessary, Revise Student Program

If a student has been in the program for two consecutive years and still has not made adequate progress, the district must completely assess the educational needs of the student. If appropriate, the district must use the results to change the program to better suit the student's needs. Parents should be involved in this process.

## 8. KEEP MODIFYING THE PROGRAM UNTIL IT MEETS ITS GOALS

A school must continue to revise its Chapter 1 program improvement plan and change its Chapter 1 program until it meets the goals set by the school district. The school also must revise the programs of individual students until the students start making "substantial progress" toward meeting these goals.

# III ▪ THE KEY RIGHTS OF CHAPTER 1 CHILDREN

Chapter 1 law sets up the chronology of steps described in the previous chapter to protect the rights of children in the Chapter 1 program. As a parent, you must know what these rights are, and make sure that they are protected.

What are these rights? In sum, Chapter 1 children have a right to Chapter 1 programs that actually make a difference in their academic achievement so that they no longer fall behind other students. To make sure that these programs do actually make a difference, the law requires that school districts define the goals that they want their Chapter 1 programs to accomplish. Then schools are held accountable for accomplishing the goals that they set. If a school does not accomplish these goals, it must change its program until it does accomplish them.

Below are described your child's most important rights. There are also some questions you can ask to discover whether, in fact, your school is violating these rights, and not running its Chapter 1 program in ways that the law requires. Those who may be able to help you answer these questions include: your children, other parents, your children's teachers, other staff in the school, parental involvement staff, or members of the school district's central office. Remember, action is required if any of these rights is being violated.

## A. CHILDREN WHO ARE IN GREATEST NEED MUST BE SERVED FIRST.

The intent of Chapter 1 is to reach those children farthest behind their classmates in school and, therefore, most in need of extra educational help. Therefore, the law requires schools to use Chapter 1 money to help their lowest achieving students. Unless a school qualifies to operate a schoolwide project, it cannot use the Chapter 1 money as aid for all students.

*Questions to ask regarding your own child:*

- Is my child's school receiving Chapter 1 money?

- Does my child qualify for Chapter 1 services?

- If my child qualifies, does he or she receive these services?

- If my child does not receive them, why not?

*Other general questions to ask:*

- How does the school district determine who are the educationally deprived children?

- How does the school district decide which of the educationally deprived children it will serve?

- How many grades within each school and children within each grade is the district serving?

## B. CHAPTER 1 FUNDS MUST GIVE STUDENTS EXTRA EDUCATIONAL HELP.

Chapter 1 funds must be used to provide services that are *in addition to* the regular services normally provided to the district's children. Thus, Chapter 1 children should be receiving more than they would receive if they were not involved in the Chapter 1 program.

To ensure that Chapter 1 funds are used to provide services that are in addition to regular services, the law requires school districts to meet three rules concerning how they spend regular state and local money in relation to their Chapter 1 dollars. School districts must (1) maintain effort; (2) provide services in project areas with state and local funds that are at least comparable to services provided in areas not receiving Chapter 1 services; and (3) use Chapter 1 funds to supplement, not supplant, regular non-Federal funds. (See "Rules on How Chapter 1 Funds Must Be Spent," below.)

These requirements are intended to ensure that dollars spent on and services provided to Chapter 1 children from other sources besides Chapter 1 are equal to (not less than) services provided to the non-Chapter 1 children.

*Questions to ask regarding your own child:*

- What kind of Chapter 1 services is my child receiving?

- Are these services over and above what other students are receiving who are not in the Chapter 1 program?

- Is Chapter 1 paying for services that my child would receive anyway if Chapter 1 did not exist?

*Other general questions to ask:*

- Are the state and the local school district "maintaining" their own levels of funding for public education or are they reducing their funding?

- Is the school using Chapter 1 money to provide a program that it would otherwise provide with state or local funds?

- Is there "comparability" of services between Chapter 1 schools and non-Chapter 1 schools? Are the children in Chapter 1 schools receiving fewer resources from other sources than children in non-Chapter 1 schools?

## C. SCHOOL DISTRICTS MUST SET CLEAR AND HIGH GOALS FOR ALL STUDENTS' ACHIEVEMENT. THEY CANNOT EXPECT LESS OF CHAPTER 1 CHILDREN, NOR GIVE THEM LESS.

This is one of the most important requirements in the Chapter 1 law. Local school districts must determine the local goals for children in the Chapter 1 program. The law calls these goals "desired outcomes" and states that these desired outcomes must be stated in terms of the "basic and more advanced skills that all children are expected to master."

Thus, a school district must figure out exactly what it is that it wants all its students to know and be able to do. It must set these skills as the desired outcomes of its Chapter 1 program. Then it must design its Chapter 1 programs to ensure that the lowest achieving students achieve these goals.

Moreover, the law now says that the goals that are set for Chapter 1 children can be no different from the goals for all children. The law expresses this by saying that the skills that we expect Chapter 1 children to learn must be the skills "all children are expected to master." Therefore, Chapter 1 students can no longer be subjected to lower expectations and a simpler or weaker curriculum. Instead, they must be expected to achieve the same goals as other students and be provided the extra help to achieve these goals.

Why is setting goals so important? For too long Chapter 1 programs have under-challenged disadvantaged students. Continual drill and repetition of basic skills have limited their opportunities to progress to more challenging material. In addition, Chapter 1 students have all too often failed to make the progress they should be making while in the program. Only when schools start to figure out what they want their Chapter 1 programs to accomplish, set clear and high goals, and operate programs that best help children meet these goals will these problems end.

*Questions to ask regarding your own child:*

- Is less expected of my child than of other children in the school?

- Is my child given a less complex curriculum than other children in the school? Does the Chapter 1 program only include continual drill and repetition of basic skills, or does the program teach my child how to use his or her skills to think and solve problems?

*Other questions to ask:*

- Can I see a copy of the school district's goals or "desired outcomes"?

- How has the school district set its goals (desired outcomes) for Chapter 1 children?

- Has the district included teachers and parents in the goal setting process?

- Do these desired outcomes include the "basic and more advanced skills" that we want all children to know, or do they only include test scores or other measures, such as attendance or promotion rates?

## D. A CHAPTER 1 PROGRAM MUST HELP THE CHAPTER 1 CHILDREN TO MEET THESE GOALS AND SUCCEED IN SCHOOL.

By law, a Chapter 1 program must help Chapter 1 children make "substantial progress" toward achieving the local goals. That is, Chapter 1 programs must make real improvements in student achievement. These programs must enable the students to improve achievement in basic and advanced skills, succeed in the regular school program, and perform at grade level. Schools must design programs and target resources in ways that ensure such results.

How much must a Chapter 1 student improve each year, and thus, how much progress is considered "substantial"? Although the law does not spell this out, the legislative history does: Chapter 1 children must make enough progress through the program each year so that they catch up with their classmates within three years and learn the "basic and more advanced skills that all children are expected to master." Any definition of "substantial" that allows students to remain in the Chapter 1 program year after year without catching up with their classmates is not acceptable.

*Questions to ask regarding your own child:*

- Is my child assessed initially and regularly to determine his or her progress toward achievement of the goals set?

- Is my child making "substantial progress" toward achieving these goals each year?

- Is he or she doing better in the regular program, and performing closer to grade level?

- Has my child been in the Chapter 1 program for more than a few years? If so, why?

*Other questions to ask:*

- How are the children assessed?

- Has the school district, with parents and teachers, determined how much progress is considered "substantial"? Is this definition high enough to help children in Chapter 1 catch up after three years in the program?

- Are the children in the school as a whole making "substantial progress" toward achieving the goals set each year?

## E. IF A CHAPTER 1 PROGRAM IS NOT WORKING, IT MUST BE CHANGED UNTIL IT DOES WORK.

The Chapter 1 law requires school districts and schools to change any Chapter 1 program that is not helping its students meet the goals that they have set. Under law, this is called "program improvement."

The school district and the school must change the Chapter 1 program in ways "that have the *greatest likelihood* of improving the performance" of Chapter 1 children. And they must continue to change the Chapter 1 program until the Chapter 1 children are making "substantial progress" toward learning the "basic and advanced skills that all children are expected to master." The purpose of program improvement is to make sure that no Chapter 1 program remains in place that is failing to work.

If an individual student fails to progress adequately in the Chapter 1 program, the school must consider changing that student's Chapter 1 program, whether or not the school is changing the overall Chapter 1 program. The reason is the same -- no child should remain in a Chapter 1 program year after year that is not working for him or her.

*Questions to ask regarding your own child:*

- Has my child been in the Chapter 1 program for one year and not made "substantial progress toward meeting the desired outcomes"?

- If so, has the school considered changes in the program to help my child do better?

- Has my child been in the program two years in a row and still not made adequate progress?

- If so, has the district completely assessed the educational needs of my child? Has the district used the results of this assessment, where appropriate, to change the program for my child?

*Other questions to ask:*

- Are the Chapter 1 children as a whole making "substantial progress" in learning the skills which all children are expected to learn?

- If not, has the district, with teacher and parent input, developed a program improvement plan to improve the Chapter 1 program?

- Do the program improvement changes have the greatest likelihood of improving the performance of Chapter 1 children?

- Has the plan been carried out as quickly as possible so that children do not repeat a program that has not served them well?

- If there is a program improvement plan, is it adequately raising the overall achievement of the Chapter 1 children?

- If not, is the state working with the district, the school, and parents to change it?

- Are these changes being made as quickly as possible?

## F. SCHOOLS MUST COORDINATE THE CHAPTER 1 PROGRAM WITH THE REGULAR PROGRAM AND OTHER SPECIAL PROGRAMS. THEY MUST MAKE SURE THAT NEITHER THE CHAPTER 1 PROGRAM NOR THE REGULAR PROGRAM PREVENTS CHAPTER 1 CHILDREN FROM SUCCEEDING IN SCHOOL AND MEETING THE SCHOOL'S GOALS.

The law now requires that both Chapter 1 and regular teachers spend ongoing time and resources coordinating the Chapter 1 program and the regular instructional program. They must make sure that the programs fit together well and that neither impedes the success of the other.

Why does this requirement exist? There will be confusion if the Chapter 1 program and the regular program do not fit well together and build on each other. But far worse can happen. Both the Chapter 1 program and the regular program can actually hinder the progress of Chapter 1 students *if* they are not designed carefully.

For example, Chapter 1 services can actually prevent a child's success in the regular program. This can happen, for example, if the Chapter 1 services are not designed with the regular program in mind, and if Chapter 1 children miss valuable regular class time to receive Chapter 1 services.

The regular program can also prevent the achievement of Chapter 1 kids. Schools frequently separate low-income or minority kids, those often served by Chapter 1, into separate "low-achieving" groups or "tracks" from other students during the regular class time. They also hold these kids to lower expectations and hold back too many of them. These practices prevent these children from learning the skills we want all children to learn. The Chapter 1 law makes clear that neither the Chapter 1 program nor the regular program can do anything that frustrates the success of Chapter 1 children.

*Questions to ask regarding your own child:*

- Is the overall educational program of my child well coordinated?

- Is my child missing something important in his or her regular education program by being in the Chapter 1 program?

- Is my child tracked or grouped into less challenging instruction or a lower level in the regular program?

- Is my child losing interest in school because the curriculum is not challenging? Is he or she beginning to think of himself or herself as less smart than other students?

- What are the curriculum, goals, and textbooks for the regular program that my child is in (class or discussion group)?

*Other questions to ask:*

- Are the Chapter 1 staff and regular teachers working together to plan their programs? Do the programs fit together well?

- Are Chapter 1 children losing the knowledge gained from the regular program because of the structure of Chapter 1 services?

- Are Chapter 1 children tracked or grouped into less challenging or lower levels in the regular program? Is this making it impossible for these children to learn those skills we want all children to learn?

## Rules on How CHAPTER 1 Funds Must Be Spent

There are three different requirements that school districts must meet to ensure that they are not spending Chapter 1 funds *instead of* spending local or state money, are using Chapter 1 funds to provide *extra* services to eligible students, and are spending *as much on Chapter 1 schools* as on other schools in the district.

**"Maintenance of effort"**

According to Section 1018(a), a LEA may receive Chapter 1 funds only if:

> ... either the combined fiscal effort per student or the aggregate expenditures of that agency and the State with respect to the provision of free public education by that agency for the preceding fiscal year was not less than 90 percent of such combined fiscal effort or aggregate expenditures for the second preceding fiscal year.

This means that state and local payments for public education in a district in any year must be roughly the same (at least 90%) as the payments the year before. The school district cannot use Chapter 1 as a vehicle to reduce its own spending on education.

If last year the LEA spent less than 90% of what it spent the year before, then the SEA must reduce the LEA's allocation by the exact percentage it was below the 90% level.

**"Supplement, not supplant"**

According to Section 1018(b), a SEA or LEA may use Chapter 1 funds:

> ... only so as to supplement and, to the extent practicable, increase the level of funds that would, in the absence of such Federal funds, be made available from non-Federal sources for the education of pupils participating in programs and projects assisted under this chapter and in no case may such funds be so used as to supplant such funds from such non-Federal sources.

*(continued)*

**Rules on How CHAPTER 1 Funds Must Be Spent** (*continued*)

Since the goal is to increase the level of funding spent on Chapter 1 children, this requirement means that a school district must use Chapter 1 funds to *add to*, not replace, non-Federal funds from the regular school budget. The same amount of regular funds must be spent on Chapter 1 children as on other children, *plus* the additional funds available through Chapter 1.

Therefore, school districts cannot use Chapter 1 money to provide a program to Chapter 1 students that they would otherwise provide with state or local money. School districts also cannot pay with Chapter 1 funds for a program that *substitutes* for the program the Chapter 1 students would otherwise receive out of the regular school budget. (For example, supplanting occurs if Chapter 1 pays the whole cost of a pull-out program that takes the place of regular instruction. The school district must continue to spend the same amount of non-federal funds on the Chapter 1 children that it would have spent if these children had remained in the regular classroom.)

**"Comparability"**

According to Section 1018(c), an LEA may receive Chapter 1 funds:

> ... only if State and local funds will be used in the district of such agency to provide services in project areas which, taken as a whole, are at least comparable to services being provided in areas in such district which are not receiving funds under this chapter. Where all school attendance areas in the district of the agency are designated as project areas, the agency may receive such funds only if State and local funds are used to provide services, which, taken as a whole, are substantially comparable in each project area.

Comparability means that before using Chapter 1 dollars, districts must provide equal services to the schools from other funding sources. This means that all school areas in a district must start with equal services -- be comparable -- before the district can receive Chapter 1 funds. Chapter 1 schools should have about the same number and quality of regular teachers, support personnel, instructional materials, and supplies as non-Chapter 1 schools.

## CHAPTER 1 Services for Children with Disabilities or with Limited English Proficiency

### Eligibility for Services

There is a widespread practice of denying Chapter 1 services to children with disabilities or limited English proficiency (LEP). This, however, is against the law. Section 1014(d) makes clear that these children should also receive Chapter 1 services if they "have needs stemming from educational deprivation and not related solely to the disabling condition or the limited English proficiency."

To determine this, one can ask: Would the standard services for limited English proficiency or a disability (i.e., bilingual education or special education) solve the academic problems of these children, or would they need extra educational services in addition to these services to catch up with their classmates?

The reason behind these provisions is that there are other federal, state and local laws besides Chapter 1 that are designed to address the needs of children with disabilities or limited English proficiency.* Chapter 1 funds may not be used to do what other laws already require; they can only address academic problems over and above the needs that stem from a disability or language limitation.

### Appropriate Assessments

However, problems often develop in trying to sort this out. Therefore, while a school district must select LEP or disabled children on the same basis as the other children receiving Chapter 1 services, it can determine an LEP child's eligibility for Chapter 1 in one of two ways. If a student has sufficient English proficiency, the school district can

*(continued)*

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* For example, The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), 20 U.S.C. §1401 *et seq.*, provides for federal aid to reimburse state and local education agencies for a portion of the cost of providing special education and related services to students who need it, and establishes the right of every disabled student to a "free appropriate public education." Two sources of federal law that support the claims on behalf of limited English proficient students are Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. §601 *et seq.*, and the Equal Educational Opportunities Act of 1974, 20 U.S.C. §1703(f). (See Appendix A for an explanation of these abbreviations and symbols.)

**CHAPTER 1 Services for Children with Disabilities or Limited English Proficiency** *(continued)*

use the same selection criteria it uses for English speaking children with or without bilingual assistance. Students who do not have sufficient English proficiency can be selected based on other measures such as classroom teacher evaluations and tests in their own language.

### Appropriate Services

Chapter 1 funds must be used to meet the special needs resulting from educational deprivation; the funds cannot be used to address the children's disabilities or lack of English language proficiency. In addition, the program goals for disabled or LEP Chapter 1 students can be no different from the goals for the other Chapter 1 students. However, an LEA may change the Chapter 1 instruction to better serve LEP children. For example, schools can provide bilingual staff and materials for these students, if necessary, to meet their educational deprivation.

Examples of Chapter 1 services for LEP students:

- If one primary language, such as Spanish, is spoken by LEP students, a Spanish-English speaking bilingual teacher can provide assistance to the students in the areas in which the students are low-achieving in the regular classroom during class time.
- If several languages are spoken by the LEP students, a trained instructor in ESL (English as a Second Language) can serve a similar role.

Examples of Chapter 1 services for disabled students:

- An aide, tutor, or teacher can provide extra help during the mainstreamed instructional activities to Chapter 1 students who may also be disabled.
- There can be a teacher funded by both special education and Chapter 1 in order to teach disabled students part of the day, and Chapter 1 children another part. In the part of the day during which the teacher is working with Chapter 1 students, he/she could be working with some of the disabled students who were eligible and selected for Chapter 1 services.

*(continued)*

**CHAPTER 1 Services for Children with Disabilities or Limited English Proficiency** ***(continued)***

### Supplanting

The "supplement not supplant" requirement also applies in this context. Chapter 1 funds cannot be used to provide services to disabled or LEP children that other federal, state or local laws require to be made available to them. For example, Chapter 1 money should not pay for special education services that the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires. Where there are schoolwide Chapter 1 programs, children with disabilities or limited English proficiency must receive the same services funded by non-Chapter 1 funds that they would receive in non-Chapter 1 schools.

### Coordination

Finally, Section 1012(b)(4) of the law requires "maximum coordination" between Chapter 1 services and services provided to help children's disabling conditions or limited English proficiency. The purpose of this coordination is to "increase program effectiveness, eliminate duplication, and reduce fragmentation of the students' programs." Some examples of this type of coordination include:

- team meetings between instructors from Chapter 1, special education, LEP programs, and the regular program;
- sharing of needs assessment information among programs; and
- using the schoolwide project option to develop better teacher training, program offerings, and curriculum development.

### Misplacement of Children

Schools often confuse needs related to limited English proficiency or disabilities with needs related to academic achievement problems. For example, they frequently identify students as learning disabled when they only have academic problems. These children are placed in special education when instead they should receive Chapter 1 services. On the other hand, schools also fail to identify disabilities, and put low-achieving children who need special education services into Chapter 1. There must be better assessment and placement of children, so that they are in programs that can best address their needs and are included in the regular classroom wherever possible.

# IV ▪ THE KEY RIGHTS OF PARENTS OF CHAPTER 1 CHILDREN

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*How the CHAPTER 1 law defines "parents":*

> "Parent" (1) The term includes a legal guardian or other person standing in loco parentis.
>
> (2) "In loco parentis" means a person acting in place of a parent or legal guardian, and may include a person such as a grandparent, stepparent, aunt, uncle, older sibling, or other person either - (i) With whom a child lives; or (ii) Who has been designated by a parent or legal guardian to act in place of the parent or legal guardian regarding all aspects of the child's education.

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As a parent or person acting as a child's parent, you must make sure that your children's rights are not being violated.

How can you do this? Fortunately, the law now makes it easier. The reason is that **Section 1016** of the Chapter 1 law, the section on parental involvement, begins by recognizing that "activities by schools to increase parental involvement are a vital part of" the Chapter 1 program. Toward this end, Section 1016 states that a school district may receive Chapter 1 funds "only if it implements programs, activities, and procedures for the involvement of parents" in Chapter 1 programs. The law continues: "Such activities and procedures shall be planned and implemented with meaningful consultation with parents of participating children and must be of sufficient size, scope, and quality to give reasonable promise of substantial progress toward achieving the goals" of the parental involvement program.

By law, you, as a parent, have the right to be involved in the entire process described above -- designing, operating, evaluating, and improving the Chapter 1 program. And the law gives you other rights as well: the right to receive the necessary information about the program; the right to receive training and materials to work with your children at home; the right to be more involved in school.

Below are the specific ways that the law *requires* parents to be involved. As the list shows, there are a variety of ways for parents to participate in their children's education. Therefore, you must choose the type and level of participation that works best for you. Whatever your choices, you must use these rights to make sure that the programs are working for your children.

## A. AN ANNUAL MEETING AND OTHER REGULAR MEETINGS

To start the parental involvement program, "each local educational agency shall convene an annual meeting to which all parents of participating children shall be invited...." Although the annual meeting can be at the district or school level, it should usually be held at both levels to be effective. All Chapter 1 parents must be invited. During this meeting, participating parents must have the opportunity to meet other parents, plan the parental involvement program, and get it started. The meeting should also enable parents to learn about Chapter 1 and about their rights as Chapter 1 parents, to meet teachers and other school staff, and to give suggestions about the Chapter 1 program. Parents must also have the chance to set up ways to establish ongoing communication among parents, and between parents and the schools.

There should also be regular parent meetings throughout the year to continue what was started by the annual meeting. The law requires each school district "to provide opportunities for regular meetings of parents to formulate parental input into the program, if parents of participating children so desire."

## B. ACCESS TO INFORMATION

To be able to participate meaningfully in Chapter 1, parents must receive the necessary information both in these meetings and beyond. Therefore, the law requires that parents always receive "timely" information about the program, their children's progress, and the parental involvement program. In fact, the law states that an essential goal of the parental involvement program is "to inform parents of participating children of the program under this chapter, the reasons for their children's participation in such programs, and the specific instructional objectives and methods of the program."

*What information do you need:*

- the specific requirements of the Chapter 1 law;
- the schools that are receiving funds and how the money is spent;
- the specific goals of the program;
- the content of the program;
- the way student progress is measured;
- why your child or children are in the Chapter 1 program;

- your own child's educational needs;
- your own child's progress;
- the parental involvement policies and program.

*Some of the ways you are entitled to receive this information:*

- the annual meeting and other regular meetings (see A, above);
- reports and conferences (see C, below);
- written material: You should be provided with written materials that address the issues outlined above. In addition, if you request them, copies of all Chapter 1 applications, evaluations, improvement plans, and other public documents and reports must be made available. The parental involvement policy should also be made available to you, even if you do not request it (see D, below).

## C. REPORTS AND CONFERENCES

The law also requires the school district "to provide parents of participating children with reports on the children's progress, and to the extent practical, hold a parent-teacher conference with the parents of each child served in the program...." The purpose of the conference must, at the very least, be "to discuss that child's progress, placement, and methods by which parents can complement the child's instruction." The school must take reasonable steps to reach those parents for whom there may be particular barriers to involvement, such as work or child care obligations, transportation, and limited English proficiency.

## D. WRITTEN PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT POLICIES

The law envisions that through these meetings and with this information, parents will be in the position to organize themselves in the way they see as appropriate to carry out the parental involvement mandates of the law. This parent organization will then be able to work together with the school district on the development of a parental involvement policy. The law requires that each school district, "after consultation with and review by parents, shall develop written policies to ensure that parents are involved in the planning, design, and implementation of programs...."

- This parent involvement policy should, at the very least, spell out how parents will become involved in all of the areas described in this section and provide an overall action plan.

- Parents must help develop these policies, and be able to review and comment on them.

- The school district must make "such policies ... available to parents of participating children." It is not enough to give copies only to parents who ask for them without publicizing that copies are available.

## E. PARENT INVOLVEMENT IN THE PLANNING, DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CHAPTER 1 PROGRAM

The parental involvement policy must state how parents will be involved in the "planning, design, and implementation" of the Chapter 1 program. In fact, by law, parents must now be involved in all major decisions about the Chapter 1 program, including:

- setting the local goals for the children;
- developing the local Chapter 1 applications;
- selecting and assessing Chapter 1 schools and students;
- planning, designing, and implementing the Chapter 1 programs;
- evaluating the programs;
- developing all program improvement plans and setting timetables for their implementation;
- agreeing to the choice of technical assistance providers and how program improvement funds are spent;
- reviewing all draft and final regulations proposed by the state governing Chapter 1 programs;
- developing and carrying out parental involvement programs;
- evaluating how the parent involvement program is working and determining what steps need to be taken to improve it;
- choosing their own representatives for these policy making functions.

As this list shows, parents must be consulted about "all aspects of the Chapter 1 program" at both the district and school level throughout the whole year. This consultation must be "organized, systematic, ongoing, informed, and timely in relation to decisions about the program." It must include "timely response" to parent recommendations.

## F. MORE OPPORTUNITIES FOR PARENTS TO BE INVOLVED IN SCHOOL

The Chapter 1 law also requires Chapter 1 parents to be more directly involved in the education of their children, both at home and in school. This requirement reflects the growing evidence that children are more likely to succeed in school when their parents are involved in their education.

To promote greater parental involvement at school, the law now requires that you have a "comprehensive range" of opportunities to become involved, including:

- meeting with school administrators, teachers, and other staff, and sitting in on the Chapter 1 program. The law requires education personnel "to be readily accessible to parents" and to "permit parents to observe the activities funded under this chapter";
- being consulted about the educational program of your own child, especially if your child is not making the progress he or she should be making;
- choosing a person to represent your interests and other parents' interests for the Chapter 1 program in the school and for policy-making functions in which parental involvement is required;
- volunteering or being paid to participate in the school.

## G. GREATER SUPPORT FOR PARENTS' EFFORTS TO WORK WITH THEIR CHILDREN AT HOME

To promote greater involvement of parents in the education of their children at home, the law requires schools, as much as possible, to "support the efforts of parents ... to work with their children in the home ...."

The types of support that schools can give for home activities include:

- appropriate instructional materials so that you can continue Chapter 1 instruction at home;
- adequate training so that you can understand and help your child achieve Chapter 1's instructional objectives;
- training and support of school staff who can work with you, coordinate parent activities, and make home contacts.

## H. ADEQUATE TRAINING TO ENSURE A STRONG PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT PROGRAM

The law recognizes that the successful implementation of the above parental involvement requirements will require training for parents, teachers, and other school staff. Therefore, the law requires school districts to:

- "support the efforts of parents, including training parents, to the maximum extent practicable, to work with their children at home ... and understand the program requirements...";

- "train parents and teachers to build a partnership between home and school";

- "train teachers and other staff involved in the [Chapter 1] program to work effectively with parents of participating students."

## I. REASONABLE SUPPORT FOR PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT ORGANIZATIONS AND ACTIVITIES

The law recognizes that parents will need support, in addition to training, in order to develop successful parental involvement activities. Thus the law requires that school districts "provide such reasonable support for parental involvement activities as parents may request." What this means is that, by law, once parents request support, so long as it is reasonable, a school district must provide it. Examples of the support that parents may request include:

- access to meeting space and printing facilities;
- training to help them understand the Chapter 1 program;
- expenses associated with attendance of parents at training sessions, including transportation and baby sitting;
- hiring and training of parental involvement liaison people to directly contact parents and coordinate parent activities.

According to the law, the parental involvement programs, activities, and procedures may include:

- regular parent conferences;
- parent resource centers;
- parent training programs, including the costs of attending training;
- parent involvement liaison workers;
- reporting to parents on their children's progress;
- training and support of personnel to work with parents, coordinate parent activities, and make home contacts;

- use of parents as classroom volunteers, tutors, and aides;
- school-to-home complementary curriculum and materials and assistance in implementing home-based education activities;
- timely provision of information and responses to recommendations;
- all costs involved in involving parents in the planning, design, and implementation of the programs;
- parent advisory councils;
- other activities to enlist the support and participation of parents.

Schools must permit parents the opportunity to organize themselves in ways that they want, including forming parent advisory councils at the district and school level. The law anticipates that with adequate information, training, and support, parents will be able to determine the kind of organizations they need in order to be involved, and be able to develop them.

## J. INVOLVEMENT OF PARENTS WHO LACK LITERACY SKILLS OR WHOSE PRIMARY LANGUAGE IS NOT ENGLISH

The law also recognizes that a successful parental involvement program will require schools to involve all parents, including those parents who have additional barriers to involvement. Therefore, school systems must "ensure opportunities, to the extent practicable, for full participation of parents who lack literacy skills or whose primary language is not English." "Information, programs and activities for parents ... shall be provided, to the extent practicable, in a language and form which the parents understand."

## K. ANNUAL ASSESSMENT OF THE PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT PROGRAM

A school system must not only assess the success of its Chapter 1 programs, but its parental involvement program. The law explains: An LEA shall "annually assess through consultation with parents, the effectiveness of the parental involvement program and determine what action needs to be taken, if any, to increase parental participation."

The Senate report accompanying Chapter 1 states that the intent of this provision "is the attempt to identify barriers to greater participation and determine possible steps to overcome those barriers." Every year, school systems and parents must figure out how well their parental involvement programs are working. And they must continually search for new ways to increase parental participation.

## L. USE OF COMPLAINT PROCEDURES TO CORRECT VIOLATIONS

The law requires state education officials to have a formal complaint system for parents and their advocates, and to make it available to parents. The complaint procedure allows parents to make public the violations that they identify and to seek a remedy.

Through this procedure, parents can file a written "complaint" with either the local school system or the state department of education. The complaint must state how local or state officials have violated a legal requirement of the Chapter 1 program. One parent, many parents, or an organization can submit the complaint. (See "How The Complaint Procedure Works," below.)

## M. OTHER LEGAL RIGHTS - THE RIGHT TO ORGANIZE, COMMUNICATE, AND OBTAIN PUBLIC INFORMATION

In addition to parents' specific rights under Chapter 1, there are other legal rights that may help parents take an active role in the Chapter 1 program.

Most important, under the First Amendment to the United States Constitution, you have the right to speak out, to distribute literature, to assemble or meet, to petition or complain, and to form the type of organizations that you want. Furthermore, once the school makes any of its facilities (e.g., regular meeting space, copying machines) available to any parent group or outside group, it must make those facilities available to your group on a nondiscriminatory basis. Neither you nor your children can be punished in any way for exercising these constitutional rights.

Students and parents also have the right to inspect and obtain copies of school documents, including Chapter 1 documents, under individual state "public records" or "freedom of information" laws. These laws are different in different states, but usually cover most documents that are not personal information about particular students or other individuals -- such as statistics, budgets, program applications, evaluations, etc.

Finally, under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, parents (and students over 18 or with the consent of parents) have the right to see all records about the student maintained anywhere and in any form by the school system. In addition, with some exceptions, parents also control access to the records of their children. In general, third parties cannot see any of the records without informed written parental consent.

# V ▪ HOW CHAPTER 1 PARENTS CAN MAKE THE MOST OF THEIR RIGHTS TO BE INVOLVED

Why is parental involvement important? First, research shows that when parents are involved in positive ways, schools improve and children do better. Second, without significant parent involvement, there is no guarantee that the Chapter 1 programs will meet the needs of students and parents in a particular community. Third, informed and involved parents are in the best position to enforce the law because they and their children have the most contact and highest stake in the program.

## A. HOW PARENTS CAN BECOME MORE INVOLVED

Here are some suggestions about how all parents can start becoming involved in Chapter 1.

**1. Ask questions of your principal or district office. (At the district office, you will usually want to speak to the Chapter 1 director, or the person in charge of parent involvement.)**

Ask for a copy of the parent involvement policy:
Has the parent involvement policy been distributed to all parents? How has the school made sure that parents understand it? How were parents involved in writing and reviewing it? Does the policy spell out the specific steps to ensure that parents are involved in all of the ways required by the Chapter 1 law? Are parents involved in the planning and implementation of the Chapter 1 programs?

Ask about the Chapter 1 annual meeting:
When was it held? Was notice sent to all parents? Were parents involved in planning it? Did the meeting help parents understand the Chapter 1 law and their child's Chapter 1 program? Ask for the meeting's notice, agenda, and minutes.

Ask about school communication with parents:
What information has been given to parents about their children and the Chapter 1 program? Have there been parent-teacher conferences

about the Chapter 1 program? Has information been multi-lingual, where needed?

Ask about on-going communication *among* parents:
Did parents have a chance at the annual meeting to set up ways to have ongoing communication among themselves? Have there been regular meetings since?

Ask about the types of training and support available to parents:
Are parents given the training they need to become involved in the Chapter 1 program? Are they given training and information to better work with their children at home?

**2. Ask to meet with your child's Chapter 1 teacher, if there is one, and the regular teacher. Sit in on a class.**

Remember that the school must hold a parent-teacher conference with each Chapter 1 parent each year, to the extent practical. At the conference, the school must discuss your child's progress, placement, and how you can help your child in partnership with the school. By law, the school staff must also be readily accessible to parents, and allow parents to observe Chapter 1 activities.

**3. Attend Chapter 1 meetings.**

Attend the Chapter 1 annual meeting. Also go to your school's next meeting for Chapter 1 parents. If this meeting is not coming up soon, go to a more general parents' meeting, and bring up Chapter 1. Find out if your school or school district has a Chapter 1 Parent Advisory Council. Go to its next meeting. If the times set for any of these meetings are inconvenient for the many parents who work, ask the school to choose times when more parents can come.

**4. Become informed about the Chapter 1 law, Chapter 1 regulations, and your district's Chapter 1 policy.**

You are entitled to and can get this information from other parents, students, school administrators, teachers, the local education agency, or the state education agency. Remember that Chapter 1 documents (for example, federal, state, and local laws, regulations, guidelines, project applications, needs assessment documents, program plans, budget information, evaluation data) are public documents, and thus must be readily available to you if you request them.

**5. Learn as much as you can about the Chapter 1 program in your school, its problems, and possible solutions.** (See Chapters VI & VII for a discussion of common problems and possible solutions.)

Ask your school questions about its Chapter 1 program (see Chapter II for possible questions to ask). In particular, make sure that Chapter 1 children are not subject to lower expectations, are not losing out on the regular program, and have the same curriculum and textbooks as other children. Also make sure that the Chapter 1 program is really helping the students to close the achievement gap and succeed in school.

**6. Make sure Chapter 1 is working for your child.**

Find out exactly what kinds of Chapter 1 services your child is getting. Make sure these services are in addition to the services your child would normally receive if he or she were not in Chapter 1. Make sure the Chapter 1 services are really helping, not making it harder for your child to catch up with his or her classmates and learn the skills that the school district wants all children to learn.

If your child is not making adequate progress through Chapter 1, work with the school to change his or her individual program. This is your right by law.

**7. Talk with other parents. Learn about their experiences and problems.**

## B. WAYS TO DEVELOP AND MAINTAIN STRONG AND EFFECTIVE PARENT INVOLVEMENT

**1. Work to develop an organized and active Chapter 1 parents' group or council.**

You do not need permission of the school officials, school board, or state department of education to form a parents' organization. This organization can be at the district, local, or school level, or at all three. A parent group, by law, should have reasonable support for its activities. Design your own budget that will cover your involvement needs. Bring new parents into the Chapter 1 parent organization by outreach early in the school year.

**2. Understand the importance of the fall annual meeting. Take an active role in planning and running this meeting.** (See box, "The Annual Meeting," below.)

**3. Make sure that your district has a written parent involvement policy. Take an active role in developing this policy or in amending it, if one already exists.** (See box, "Components of a Chapter 1 Parental Involvement Policy," below.)

**4. Make sure that parent consultation does not become a "rubber stamping" by a few, selected parents.**

"Parent input" must involve the real, informed view of many Chapter 1 parents, not just a few.

**5. Make sure that communication among parents does not break down during the year.**

For example, you could set up a newsletter committee or telephone tree to communicate regularly with all parents.

**6. Assess your own needs for training. Push for a good training program for parents, developed with parent input.**

This may be key to maintaining effective involvement. Areas that the training program must cover include how the Chapter 1 program operates, Chapter 1's legal requirements, the key rights of Chapter 1 children, how parents can work effectively with each other and with the school, and educational issues related to the Chapter 1 program.

**7. Explore with your schools the possibility of using some of the Chapter 1 money to hire and train a parent liaison person.**

The liaison person can directly contact parents and coordinate parent activities. The liaison person should be bilingual, if needed, and sensitive to the needs of parents and the community.

**8. Make sure that parent liaison persons or parent coordinators always continue to work on behalf of parents and in their interests.**

Parent involvement staff frequently are hired from the community. Nevertheless, there is always the risk that over time they will act more on behalf of the school district and the schools in which they work than on behalf of parents. There needs to be continued training and other mechanisms to ensure that these staff people always remain accountable to the interests and needs of parents.

**9. Explore the possibility of developing a parent resource center in your school or community.**

Resource centers can be a place where family members can go to improve their own skills and learn about resources at the school and in the community that can support them in their efforts to improve their childrens' learning.

**10. Involve parents from every group.**

Realize that a Chapter 1 parent group will have the greatest power if it is representative of all Chapter 1 parents in the school or district. In addition to your own contacts, you can reach other parents through a school or district Parent Advisory Council, if one exists, a Chapter 1 program coordinator, parent coordinator, friendly school staff members, or your own children.

**11. Build alliances among other parent groups.**

These groups include the PTA, Latino groups, parents with disabled children, the Urban League, the NAACP, Head Start parents, and other community-based organizations.

**12. Evaluate the effectiveness of the parental involvement programs and activities regularly.**

Be prepared to suggest ways to improve these programs, and the types of training parents need to participate more effectively.

**13. If necessary, use your rights to make violations public and to make use of the new complaint procedures.**

**14. Always ask: "parental involvement *for what*?"**

There is the risk that involved parents will know more about and spend more time on parent involvement policies and activities than on the more direct program issues affecting their children. Involved parents must be sure to use their rights to help improve the quality of all phases of the Chapter 1 program and to make sure it is responsive to the needs of the children. Parents can insist that high goals be set for Chapter 1 students. They can make sure that the program tackles the most serious learning problems, and that it works well with the regular program. They can insist that if a Chapter 1 program does not work well, it is changed the next year.

## The Annual Meeting

## A Starting Point for Parent Involvement in CHAPTER 1

> *"Each local educational agency shall convene an annual meeting to which all parents of participating children shall be invited, to explain to parents the programs and activities" funded by Chapter 1.*

The Chapter 1 law requires school systems to hold a meeting for all parents of children eligible for Chapter 1 at the beginning of the school year. The law says that this meeting can be held district-wide or for each school. Since parents must be involved in decisions at both the school and the district level, it is better to have an initial meeting for parents at each Chapter 1 school plus a district-wide meeting.

This meeting will be a central part of a successful parental involvement program, but only if parents take an active role -- before, during, and after the meeting. Here are some suggestions on how parents can do this.

**Recognize the many purposes of the annual meeting:**

1. to explain the Chapter 1 program to parents;
2. to explain parents' rights to help make decisions about the program;
3. to give parents the opportunity to decide how they want to implement the parental involvement program;
4. to give parents the chance to set up their own methods for parent-parent communication, for developing parent input, and for setting up their own organizations;
5. to give the school and parents the chance to meet and to set up methods for parent-school consultation throughout the year.

**Take an active role before the meeting:**

1. Talk with as many other parents as you can before the meeting.
2. Find out as much as you can before the meeting about the Chapter 1 program.
3. Take an active role in planning the meeting with school officials.
4. Make sure that the invitations to parents are adequate. The invitations should reach all parents, be sent early, contain all the important information, be written in a language that all parents can understand, and include translations.
5. Make sure that the meeting is planned for a time and place that is convenient for parents.
6. Work with the school system to plan the agenda of the meeting.

**The Annual Meeting** ***(continued)***

**Go to the meeting prepared:**

1. Before the meeting, discuss with other parents your own ideas about the issues that will be discussed at the meeting.
2. Figure out what you want to accomplish through the meeting.
3. Make sure one parent is prepared to speak up on each key point.

**Take an active role at the meeting:**

1. Make sure your discussions at the meeting help you to understand:
    - what is the Chapter 1 program;
    - how the schools will deliver Chapter 1 services to the students;
    - your rights to be consulted about all key program decisions;
    - your rights to be involved and to determine how you will be involved;
    - the sources of additional information about the program.
2. After school staff explain the program and parental involvement rights, select a parent to chair the rest of meeting, if you have not already done so. Have this parent chair the meeting.
3. At this meeting, make several important decisions among yourselves. These should include:
    - how you will organize yourselves throughout the year;
    - how you will communicate with each other and the parents who are not at the meeting;
    - how you will develop parent positions on Chapter 1 issues throughout the year.
4. Work in the meeting to develop or change the parent involvement policies, or figure out when these policies will be developed and how you can participate.
5. Make sure you know what happens next and who will do what.

**Make the annual meeting the beginning, not the end, of your involvement as a Chapter 1 parent:**

1. Work to maintain parent communication and involvement.
2. Make sure parental involvement in the "planning, design, and implementation" of the Chapter 1 program does not turn out to be "rubber stamping" by a few, selected parents, without real discussion among parents.
3. Make sure parents get the information they need to develop informed opinions about the program.
4. Use the rights you have established through the meeting and the district policies to help improve the quality of all phases of the Chapter 1 program.

## Components of a CHAPTER 1 Parental Involvement Policy

The school district's parental involvement policy must spell out the programs, activities, and procedures for the involvement of parents in the Chapter 1 program. The policy should explain:

1. The specific goals that the school district and parents have for their parental involvement program.

2. How all parents will learn about the parental involvement program.

3. How parents will play a role in assessing their own needs and creating or modifying the parental involvement policy.

4. The methods by which parents will be involved in "all aspects of the Chapter 1 program," including its design, implementation, and evaluation. Among other things, it should spell out how parents will be involved in:

   - the annual meeting early in the fall
   - evaluating the program in the spring
   - setting desired outcomes, and developing next year's program application just after the evaluation
   - developing program improvement plans for schools identified as needing program improvement

5. How parents will receive regular information about the Chapter 1 program, their child's participation and progress in the program, and their rights to be involved.

6. The training that will exist for parents in areas including understanding and evaluating the program, its requirements, and its curriculum; effectively working with educators; monitoring student progress; developing parental involvement activities; and helping their children at home.

**Components of a CHAPTER 1 Parental Involvement Policy** ***(continued)***

7. The kinds of opportunities parents will have for greater involvement in school, including volunteer or paid participation, conferences, reports, and regular meetings.

8. The support and materials parents will receive to build their capacity to improve their children's learning in the home.

9. The type of training teachers and other staff will receive on how to better communicate and work with parents; coordinate parental involvement activities; and understand the importance of parental involvement.

10. How the district will provide reasonable support for parental involvement activities, whether these activities are initiated by parents themselves or by the school.

11. How the district will continuously do outreach to parents to help them become more involved, and to advise them of students' progress in general, and how their own children are doing in particular.

12. How the district will ensure the participation of parents with limited literacy or English proficiency.

13. The policy should also contain a copy of the complaint procedure developed by the state. If this procedure does not specify steps that can be taken locally, the steps should be added.

# VI ▪ HOW TO IMPROVE THE CHAPTER 1 PROGRAM IN YOUR SCHOOL

In its funding application, a school district must describe three crucial aspects of its Chapter 1 program:

1) **Local achievement goals** -- how it will set the "desired outcomes" or goals for the Chapter 1 program.

2) **Chapter 1 program design** -- how schools will structure their Chapter 1 programs and deliver the services.

3) **Assessment/evaluation techniques** -- how it will evaluate whether students have reached these goals and the effectiveness of the programs.

To a large extent, the success of Chapter 1 programs hinges on these three critical areas. Many school districts and schools, however, are handling these areas in ways that do not conform to the law or the needs of their students. The discussion below highlights problems with how the goals are currently being set, the Chapter 1 programs are being designed, and the children are being evaluated, and suggests possible alternatives.

## A. SETTING LOCAL ACHIEVEMENT GOALS

### 1. What the Law Says: Setting Desired Outcomes in Terms of Skills

The Chapter 1 law states that the school district must establish local goals for the Chapter 1 program. These goals are what it wants Chapter 1 eligible students to achieve through participating in the program. The law describes these goals as "desired outcomes" and requires these desired outcomes to be stated in terms of "*basic and more advanced skills that all children are expected to master.*"

Therefore, by law, the school system must clearly and publicly define what it wants *all* children to learn. Then it must make these skills the goals of its Chapter 1 program. These "desired outcomes" or goals, once established, must shape all other parts of the Chapter 1 program -- selection of students, program design, evaluation, and improvement.

The law gives the school district a lot of discretion in identifying these skills. It does, however, establish certain basic requirements:

- The "desired outcomes" or goals must be stated in terms of *actual skills*. Skills can be defined as abilities to use knowledge effectively or what it is a student knows and is able to do with that knowledge. Test scores are not skills. Some test scores may be *measures* of how well a student has learned a certain set of skills. The law makes clear, however, that the skills themselves must first be identified and stated as desired outcomes. Then a test, or other instrument, may be analyzed to see if it is a valid measure of how well the child is learning the skills. (See page 9 for a discussion of the meaning of "skills".)

- These skills must include both basic and *more advanced skills*. The law defines "more advanced skills" as "skills including reasoning, analysis, interpretation, problem-solving, and decisionmaking as they relate to the particular subjects in which instruction is provided" in the Chapter 1 program.

- These skills must be the skills expected of *all* children. This means that the goals that are set for Chapter 1 children cannot be any different from the goals for other children.

- School systems must identify these skills in consultation with parents and teachers.

The Senate Report accompanying the law explains the reasons behind these requirements: "The Committee is seeking to ensure that disadvantaged students are not subject to substantially different academic expectations than other students." School districts, parents, and teachers must figure out what skills they want all children to learn. These are the "desired outcomes." Then they must use Chapter 1 funds to help the lowest achieving students learn these skills.

## 2. Proper and Improper Goal Setting

It is important to understand the ways that a district would and would not satisfy the requirements of the law. A district may not state that it expects a certain amount of progress on a test "in math." A district does not teach "math." It teaches a large number of skills which together are math.

The following is an example of what could be a proper starting point for the desired outcomes for fourth graders in math:

"By the end of fourth grade, each child will:

- Recognize and work comfortably with numbers, conceptualize place-value, understand the meaning of fractions and decimals, and estimate quantities.
- Select an appropriate computational method when confronted with a problem, use calculators for complex computation, and decide upon thinking strategies for basic facts.
- Understand the properties of geometric figures and relationships.
- Collect and organize statistical data, explore the concept of chance, recognize patterns, and describe and use variables to express relationships.
- Perform word problems with a variety of structures."[*]

The school district would then have to specify the level of performance within each of these mathematical areas expected of a proficient fourth grader.

## 3. The Connection of Desired Outcomes to Standards

The requirement in the Chapter 1 law that school districts develop desired outcomes in terms of the "basic and more advanced skills that all children are expected to master" was in the forefront of education thinking. There is now widespread agreement on the need for and importance of developing performance standards, and designing curriculum to help students meet them. Standards and desired outcomes are similar; both are statements about what students should know and be able to do at a given level.

Some are pushing for the states to have primary responsibility for developing these standards. In fact, many states already have developed such standards or are in the process of developing them. (School districts' desired outcomes must incorporate and be consistent with the standards developed by their states.) Others want these decisions to be made at the school district level. There are also a wide range of efforts underway for the development of national educational standards, embodied in either a voluntary, linked system of national tests, or state-developed tests.

Finally, many believe that schools themselves -- with substantial community input -- must have a role in developing their own standards. Then they will feel more ownership of the goals and better understand what they need to do to enable all students to meet them.

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[*] This example is drawn from a framework developed by the Council for Basic Education. The framework describes what children should know and be able to do at the end of grades 4, 8, and 12 in six core subjects.

Whatever the sources of these standards, there is now general agreement about what the Chapter 1 law recognized in 1988: school districts, schools, teachers, and parents must have a clear idea about what children should be learning so that they can develop programs that work.

## 4. Potential Sources of Desired Outcomes

In defining these skills, where should a school district look? In most cases, the district should draw on already-existing sources that describe the skills *every* student should know.

Often the school district's *own regular program* may provide a basis for stating the skills that all children must learn. In developing the reading, math, or science program for the third grade, for example, the school system and teachers may have already identified what skills they expect every third grader to learn. Even if they did not do this explicitly when developing the curriculum, the curriculum itself may provide a starting place by listing the skills the school is attempting to teach.

Another source may be *state law, regulations, policies, and guidelines.* Even if a state has not issued a formal statement of standards, there are a variety of ways in which a state may have identified certain skills expected of all students. These include the state's statements of educational goals, statements of skills which students must have in order to be promoted or graduate, or any basic statewide curriculum requirements. Local school systems are not free to ignore these statements, and so they should become at least part of the local school system's skills statements. In most states, however, local school systems are free to adopt additional skills that they expect all of their students to learn.

A third source are statements by *professional organizations.* A growing number of professional education organizations have developed statements of standards and achievement goals in a particular subject area. For example, the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM), the acknowledged leader in standards setting, is in the process of implementing the mathematics standards it developed and completed several years ago. Three groups are in the forefront of forming science standards -- the National Academy for Science (NAS), the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS), and the National Science Teachers Association (NSTA). The National Commission of Social Studies in the Schools has developed guidelines for learning in its subject area. The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) has developed levels of skill achievement, although these are not aligned to grade levels. Parents and schools can draw from these statements in developing their own statements.

The fourth and most important source is ongoing informed *discussion among teachers, parents, and other school staff* about what they want their children to learn. While the other sources are important, this type of discussion must ultimately be the basis for the school district's selection of "desired outcomes."

By drawing on all these sources in setting Chapter 1 goals, school districts can ensure that their expectations for Chapter 1 children are no lower than their expectations for other students in the school system.

### 5. "NCE Gains" — How Schools Are Currently Setting Their CHAPTER 1 Goals

Unfortunately, most school districts are not following the process described above; they have not figured out the skills they want all their students to learn and set these skills as the "desired outcomes" for the Chapter 1 program, as the law requires. Instead, they have expressed their "desired outcomes" only in terms of scores on standardized tests -- most frequently in terms of "NCE gains" on these tests.

What is an NCE? NCE stands for Normal Curve Equivalent. It is similar to a percentile in that its scale runs from 1 to 99 with a midpoint of 50. Student achievement ranges from 1 to 99 on the scale. In principle, a student who makes the same progress during the year as a test's norming population (the selected group of students on whom the test was piloted) will receive the same NCE score each year (just as that student would receive the same percentile rank). But if a student makes more progress during the year than this norming population, his or her NCE score would go up.

Students in Chapter 1 are required to be tested from spring to spring or fall to fall. If, for example, students score at an NCE of 30 in the spring of one year and 30 again in the spring of the next, they would be considered to have made a zero NCE gain; this does not mean that they have made no gain in achievement. They may have. But they have not made greater gains than has the test's norming population, and thus are considered to have made no more gain than is expected in a year.

In comparison, if a child had an NCE of 45 in second grade and 47 in third grade, he or she has made progress according to the test -- he or she has learned more rapidly than the norming population, more in a year than what is expected in a year, on average.

The vast majority of states and school systems have defined as their desired outcomes: an average NCE gain that is greater than zero. Some have required an NCE gain of 1 or 2. They have required schools that do not have such gains to go through program improvement.

What does such an NCE gain really demonstrate? In theory, an NCE gain does indicate that the achievement of Chapter 1 children, as a group, has improved more rapidly than the norming sample. NCE gains, however, do not reveal the ways achievement has improved and how much; nor what our children as a group currently know and can do with that knowledge; nor what each child in the Chapter 1 program still needs to learn in order to succeed in the regular program.

In addition, small gains in NCE scores, such as those school systems have required, usually will not be enough to enable Chapter 1 students to catch up and keep up with their peers. Therefore, setting Chapter 1 "desired outcomes" in terms of NCE gains frequently frustrates the ultimate purpose of Chapter 1 -- the success of Chapter 1 children in the regular program.

The practice of defining desired outcomes in terms of NCE gains has become so widespread in large part because of certain statements in the Chapter 1 regulations. Although these regulations were put out by the Department of Education to guide school districts, they have misled school districts by allowing them to state their desired outcomes in terms other than skills. The regulations say that desired outcomes can be defined in terms of "aggregate performance" -- the combined test scores of the Chapter 1 students in the school. And they suggest that a valid goal for a Chapter 1 project would be any gain in Chapter 1 test scores relative to other students, no matter how small -- even a gain of 1 NCE.

In addition, the regulations permit schools to express their desired outcomes for Chapter 1 children in terms of other indicators -- "improved student performance measured by criterion-referenced tests, lower dropout rates, improved attendance, and fewer retentions in grades."

Test scores or these other indicators, such as lower retention rates, might *measure* whether children have learned particular skills (although it is questionable how well many tests even can do this). However, they are not skills themselves, and, as such, are not appropriate "desired outcomes."

The Chapter 1 Policy Manual recognizes this and clarifies the law. It states that a school district's Chapter 1 application must always first describe "desired outcomes for children in the project in terms of basic and more advanced skills that all children are expected to master in each instructional area included in the Chapter 1 program, and how the school district will measure substantial progress toward meeting the desired outcomes."

### 6. What You Can Do

- Make sure your district is setting high standards, not minimal test score gains, as its "desired outcomes" for its Chapter 1 students.
- Work to ensure that your school district is setting its "desired outcomes" for the Chapter 1 program in the terms that the law requires: the "basic and more advanced skills that all children are expected to master," not just in terms of NCE gains on standardized tests.
- Work with the school system to define these "desired outcomes."
- Find out whether, outside of Chapter 1, there are any state or local standards, other statements of skills all children are supposed to master, curriculum guidelines, promotion requirements etc. Make sure that your school district's desired outcomes both incorporate and are consistent with these standards. Make sure that the Chapter 1 children are learning these things.
- Gather other sources, such as statements by professional organizations, that may provide a basis for defining these desired outcomes. Draw on these sources in your discussions with the school district.

## B. CHAPTER 1 PROGRAM DESIGN

### 1. Current Chapter 1 Program Designs

#### a. The "Pull-out" Program

The majority of schools around the country design their Chapter 1 programs as pull-out programs. In pull-out programs, Chapter 1 children are taken out of the regular classroom during class time for instruction in a separate room. The instruction, usually in reading or math, is provided by a separate teacher with separate materials and equipment, and usually lasts 20-40 minutes. Pull-out classes often replace a student's regular reading or math class, but sometimes replace another class such as science or social studies.

Pull-out programs enable schools to target instructional help to the children who most need such special assistance. They developed out of the concern that these children would not receive the extra help they needed if they remained in the regular classroom, and would fall further and further behind their classmates. Pull-out programs also make it easier for schools to identify for federal auditors exactly how they are spending their Chapter 1 funds.

There is increasing skepticism about the ability of pull-out programs to help Chapter 1 children catch up with their classmates. In fact, with some exceptions, such programs have not been shown to produce significant and lasting achievement gains for children.

Why is this? Research suggests a host of problems with current Chapter 1 programs around the country that hinder their effectiveness. These problems may include:

- stigmatizing Chapter 1 children;
- lowering everyone's expectations for the performance of Chapter 1 students;
- making Chapter 1 students miss regular class time and important instruction, either in the same or different subjects than their Chapter 1 classes;
- creating confusion and fragmentation when the Chapter 1 curriculum is not geared to the regular classroom curriculum and planned with the regular teachers;
- offering lower-quality instruction;
- reinforcing ability grouping and tracking;
- providing a curriculum that is less challenging and interesting, with simpler reading texts and simpler tasks, and too much repetitive drill, work sheets, and rote memorization;
- depriving students of exposure to advanced skills such as comprehension, reading, and problem solving, while focusing excessively on basic skills such as phonics, vocabulary, addition, and subtraction;
- failing to challenge students to develop solutions to problems, to reason, and to think independently.
- failing to significantly increase the students' total amount of instructional time.

These problems are not universally true. Some pull-out programs have been very successful in raising the achievement of the lowest achieving students. Pull-out programs that are structured carefully and that have high quality teaching and curriculum can make an enormous difference for disadvantaged students. This suggests that the "pull-out" model may not be as problematic as the assumptions and practices that currently come along with it. Nevertheless, these widespread problems indicate that many schools may not be using their Chapter 1 funds in ways that are best for students.

### b. The Search for Alternative Program Designs

Many schools still use pull-out programs because they believe that Chapter 1 requires staff, materials, methods, and classroom space that are different and separate from the school's regular program. This is a misunderstanding. School districts and schools have very wide latitude in designing their Chapter 1 programs.

The only major restrictions imposed by federal law are that the Chapter 1 programs and services: 1) go to the most educationally disadvantaged students in the schools served by Chapter 1; 2) give the students more than they would have without the Chapter 1 program; and 3) address the educational needs of these students so that they can attain grade level proficiency, improve achievement in basic and advanced skills, and succeed in the regular program.

Schools are not required by law to use a pull-out program or any other specific type of program to satisfy these requirements. Each school system is free to structure its Chapter 1 programs as it wants. Schools that are eligible to develop schoolwide projects have even greater flexibility; they can spend their Chapter 1 funds to help all students in the school, not just the educationally deprived students (although they must achieve better results for Chapter 1 children than are achieved in regular Chapter 1 programs).

As school districts around the country recognize this flexibility, they have started to explore new ways to design their Chapter 1 programs and spend their Chapter 1 funds. (See Appendix B for examples of well-functioning Chapter 1 programs.)

## 2. Alternative Chapter 1 Program Designs

All schools must actively begin the process of asking where their students are in achieving the "basic and more advanced skills that all children are expected to master." Then they must plan and design their Chapter 1 programs in ways that enable the Chapter 1 students to master these skills. Below are some examples of the range of options available to school districts seeking to redesign their programs.

### a. Supplemental Education Services

There are many ways to target supplementary services to specific students without using the pull-out model. Research suggests that these approaches may also more effectively raise the achievement level of the lowest achieving students.

*Extended time strategies:*

One of the best examples of supplemental services is extended time strategies. Schools can use Chapter 1 money to offer instruction to Chapter 1 children outside of the regular school schedule. This may include before and/or after school programs, summer school programs, and Saturday programs, either in the school or in another setting. Research suggests that extended time programs can effectively increase student achievement, as long as they have high quality instruction and curriculum.

Although there are obstacles to these extended time strategies, including transportation and scheduling, such strategies are still well worth trying. These types of programs increase the amount of time that Chapter 1 children receive instruction, while not taking time away from their other subjects.

*Prevention programs:*

Pull-out programs are most commonly remedial -- they are offered to students who are already well behind in school. More and more schools, however, are shifting the emphasis of their Chapter 1 programs from remediation to prevention and early intervention. They have started spending Chapter 1 funds on preschool, kindergarten, or intensive first grade programs. These programs are designed to immediately address early signs of school failure, when they are easiest to address, so that kids who are marginally behind quickly catch up rather than fall farther behind.

Many of these programs seek to ensure that students learn to read the first time they are taught, so that they never need remedial help. Typically, they provide intensive reading help to children in the early grades, usually through tutors and/or small-group instruction. *Success-for-All*, whose major component is an intensive reading program for grades 1-3, is one example of a prevention program. Another example is *Reading Recovery* where specially trained teachers provide first grade children with intensive one-to-one reading lessons for thirty minutes a day. Prevention programs such as these have been shown to be extremely successful in increasing students' reading achievement.

*New Forms of Curriculum:*

Whether schools maintain their Chapter 1 programs as pull-out programs or shift to other modes of service delivery, they must explore new forms of curriculum that directly incorporate higher order thinking skills and sufficiently challenge students. The research agrees that this curriculum must engage students in complex tasks and activities involving comprehension, composition, and reasoning from early on in their schooling. It must be more project oriented and cross disciplinary. It also must provide students with many opportunities to learn and apply skills in context.

Significantly, the HOTS Program (Higher Order Thinking Skills), now in 1800 sites in forty-eight states, has built its reputation not by arguing against pull-out programs, but only against the nature of the curriculum and instruction typically found in such programs. HOTS maintains the pull-out structure in the form of computer instruction, but it emphasizes higher order thinking skills, as well as the different types of academic support that children need at different grades of their schooling. The focus of the program's curriculum, which is directed at children from the second half of grade three through grade seven, is not on remediation, but on an enrichment approach that teaches children "to understand how to understand."

*New Instructional Methods:*

More schools are using Chapter 1 to experiment with new forms of instruction. Cooperative learning, for example, has been shown to increase student achievement. In cooperative learning, students work in small teams to learn the academic material. Students within each team have different achievement levels, and, in many programs, students are rewarded based on how well the team masters the material. Chapter 1 can fund staff development on cooperative learning and also can pay for staff to help the Chapter 1 children who are having difficulties. Peer tutoring, in which older students work with younger students to supplement classroom learning, also has been shown to be a promising instructional technique.

*Staff Development:*

The critical importance of improved teaching to any of the above changes cannot be understated. In fact, almost all schools with successful Chapter 1 programs spend at least some of their funds on staff renewal and in-service training. Spending on staff development is particularly necessary in schools experimenting with new types of curriculum and instruction.

Using Chapter 1 funds to pay for staff development ensures a greater "bang for the buck," particularly since regular teachers and other school personnel can receive training that is paid for with Chapter 1 funds, as long as "the training is designed to meet the special education needs of participating educationally deprived children." This can include training in special instructional techniques that are successful with educationally deprived students.

*In-class Chapter 1 programs:*

The growing criticism of pull-out programs has led many schools to replace them with "in-class" Chapter 1 programs. In these programs, the Chapter 1 teacher typically provides additional help to either individual Chapter 1 students or a group of Chapter 1 children in the regular classroom during class time. The regular teacher is also present, conducting normal classroom activities.

However, there are risks involved with in-class programs. In many in-class programs, Chapter 1 teachers work with the Chapter 1 children in another part of the classroom on a long term basis. This can perpetuate the same type of tracking, stigmatization, and fragmentation caused by pull-out programs. It also frequently means that Chapter 1 students miss part of the regular program instruction each day, which can make it even harder for them to understand and keep up with the regular work when they rejoin their classmates. Research also suggests that in-class models may not be a large enough change in instructional strategy to make a difference in the achievement of these students.

This does not mean that in-class Chapter 1 programs cannot be successful. But they must be very carefully structured and coordinated with the regular program. In addition, research shows that if they use grouping arrangements, such grouping arrangements must be flexible and short-term, not permanent and achievement-based. This could work, for example, if the regular teacher had already developed mixed-ability learning teams in the classroom. Then a Chapter 1 teacher could work with some of the students from each of the groups on a short-term basis, during different times in the class. This structure would avoid the problems now commonly associated with pull-out programs.

*Supplementary/Remedial Programs:*

It is likely that there will always be some role for remedial programs for students who have already fallen behind in school. Nevertheless, research suggests that remedial programs generally must be structured differently from the pull-out model in order to be successful. They should be: 1) provided in addition to regular classroom instruction, not as a replacement for it; 2) temporary; 3) intensive; and 4) geared to individual students, not to large or even small classes of students.

Remedial programs that have shown success include intensive one-on-one tutoring (from teachers, paraprofessionals, volunteers, or other students) for students who have fallen behind, and intensive, individually-geared, computer-assisted instruction.

### b. Schoolwide Projects and School Restructuring

Schools with schoolwide projects have the flexibility to use their Chapter 1 money to benefit the whole school, not just specific children. Many schools with schoolwide projects have responded by making only modest changes in their school programs. These changes have included: using their Chapter 1 money to buy materials, books, and computers for the whole school, and hiring more teachers to reduce class size throughout the school.

A school that qualifies for a schoolwide project can go beyond spending Chapter 1 funds on these types of expenditures. It can, for example, spend more money on an intensive staff development program for all teachers. The school also can use Chapter 1 money for a more total school reform effort, such as changing the way the school is managed, the way the school delivers education to its students, and its overall curriculum. Schoolwide projects also can adopt the kinds of strategies and programs described above as effective for non-schoolwide projects.

The Chapter 1 law allows "schoolwide project" schools to combine their Chapter 1 money with other funds to carry out these changes. You should encourage your school to explore the types of schoolwide changes that have been shown to help educationally disadvantaged children succeed in school.

### c. The Need for High Quality Programs

The above descriptions are just some examples of how schools have designed or could design their Chapter 1 programs. These categories of possible Chapter 1 program designs are not mutually exclusive; a school may choose to draw on several of them, or develop an entirely different approach. The descriptions, however, can provide a starting point for thinking about Chapter 1 service delivery.

The specific design of any Chapter 1 program is less central to its success than the commitment of all involved in Chapter 1 to clearly redefine the program's goals toward higher order thinking skills, improve the program's integration with the regular program, improve its curriculum and instruction, and reduce its stigma on the children served.

Regardless of its specific choices, no school can continue to operate Chapter 1 programs that do not work for its students. And all schools must ensure that whatever Chapter 1 programs they develop really help their students learn what all children need to know to succeed in school and beyond.

### 3. What You Can Do

- Become involved in your school district's decisions about how it will design the Chapter 1 program. This is your right by law.
- If your school has pull-out programs, point out their potential problems.
- Find out whether your Chapter 1 programs have these problems.
- If these problems exist, urge your school system to correct them or rethink its Chapter 1 program design.
- Learn about the design alternatives available for the Chapter 1 program.
- Find the teachers and other technical assistance providers who could help the school district or schools rethink the design of the Chapter 1 program.

## C. ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION

### 1. The Current Use of Standardized Tests

After defining the skills that all children are expected to master and developing the curriculum needed to teach these skills, the school district must select the methods it will use to assess whether students have learned these skills.

The most common assessment method is the machine-scored, multiple choice, standardized test. School systems typically use these tests for several related purposes in their Chapter 1 program:

- to identify the students who will receive Chapter 1 services;
- to determine the educational needs the program must address;

- to determine the amount of funds that participating schools will receive;
- to determine whether the Chapter 1 programs are working in particular schools and for particular students -- requiring program improvement where they are not.

This is a large responsibility to place on these tests, and many people are wondering whether the tests are up to the task. The tests do provide comparative data, quickly and at relatively low cost. But opponents of the heavy reliance on standardized tests have pointed out that:

- These tests might not be able to show whether students have learned a particular skill or set of skills.
- These tests might not be appropriate or valid for this purpose; they might not really even measure what they claim to measure.
- Multiple choice tests might only be able to show students' grasp of basic skills, not more advanced, higher order skills such as reasoning, problem solving, and idea formation.
- Because many of these tests simply rank students against one another, they do not show what any student actually knows or can do.
- Test scores tell parents very little about their children's strengths and weaknesses.
- These tests might be unfair to students who come from minority or low-income families or to those who do not speak English as their first language.
- These type of tests often shape what teachers teach because of the enormous pressure to improve students' test scores. They encourage teachers to "teach to the test" and to drill students for them.
- "Teaching to the test" leads teachers to focus on the narrow skills measured by tests rather than the higher order thinking skills that children really need to learn. Consequently, students in such classes are not given books to read, real-world problems to solve, or courses that are infrequently tested such as history or science. Instead, they memorize discrete skills, read "dummied down" text books, and do work sheets that resemble the tests.

## 2. The Development of New Forms of Assessment

Growing recognition of these problems has led educators to search for new ways to evaluate students and programs. Some groups have proposed different types of tests from those currently given. Others urge that schools move beyond tests altogether and assess student performance throughout the year on a whole range of tasks. All these proposals strive to find better ways to measure what students know and can do, and whether students are gaining the skills and knowledge they will need to succeed.

### a. New Types of Tests

*Norm-referenced tests and criterion-referenced tests:*

By far the most common form of standardized test now used in the Chapter 1 program is the norm-referenced test. Norm-referenced tests rank students' scores against each other, not against an absolute standard. The tests are designed so that student scores fall along a bell-shaped curve -- with half below the middle score and half above. The score only reports how well a student is doing compared with other students. The unit of measurement for these tests is typically the NCE -- which explains why an NCE gain has become such a convenient goal for the Chapter 1 program. (See page 52, "NCE Gains," for an explanation of NCEs.)

Widespread doubts about the usefulness of these norm-referenced tests for assessing students and schools, however, have led to support for what are called criterion-referenced tests. Unlike norm-referenced tests, criterion-referenced tests do not just compare students with one another. Instead, they show whether a student's performance meets pre-set performance standards.

For a criterion-referenced test to succeed, however, a clear set of criteria or standards must exist. Also, the test's questions and scores must be carefully designed to reflect whether students have met these standards.

Not all criterion-referenced tests meet this challenge. Many criterion-referenced tests are still multiple choice tests that focus on basic skills and do not reflect a clear set of standards. As such, they do not adequately demonstrate what a student really knows and can do, and can hamper efforts to improve the teaching and curriculum in the Chapter 1 program.

*New forms of tests:*

These problems have led to the development of new forms of tests that are neither multiple choice nor short answer tests. One example is new performance-based exams. These exams require students to demonstrate the skills that the test is trying to measure. For example, in an exam setting, a student might be asked to write an essay, read and understand real children's literature, or do a science experiment. Performance exams seem to be better able to show what a student really knows and can do.

Other new forms of exams include "curriculum-based" exams, "open-ended" tests, and "authentic" exams. Like performance assessments, these new tests require students to solve problems from scratch rather than choose from a given set of answers, and to show that they have mastered a range of higher order thinking skills, not only basic skills. They also seek to increase the validity of the testing and promote better and more sophisticated instruction.

### b. Proposals for Alternative Assessment

There are additional proposals for new assessment methods that do not involve tests at all. In fact, many of these "alternative assessment" methods are dramatically different from current testing practices. They assess student *performance* throughout the whole year as opposed to performance on one particular day. They assess students' performance as they actually do academic tasks and demonstrate their knowledge. They also are usually more closely tied to the curriculum and the instruction in the school.

One example is *portfolio assessment*, where a student assembles examples of his or her work over the course of one or several years in a "portfolio" and is evaluated on the basis of those works. Frequently, students can include in their portfolios what they believe are their best pieces of work.

Students can also be assessed on various *projects* that they do, either alone or with other students. These projects could include, for example, research papers, scientific experiments and projects, musical performances, and art work.

In addition, new assessment techniques may include *student profiles* developed by teachers over a period of time. Teachers can take notes on each student's activities and supplement their notes with examples of the student's work.

A new approach to assessment may combine several of these methods. For example, a student could research a specific topic, write a paper, present his or her findings, and answer questions about them. The student could receive a final score as well as feedback during the process.

Questions and concerns, however, also exist about these more subjective teacher-based assessments. Their reliability, validity, and scoring bias have become an issue. There is also concern about the higher costs involved in developing them and training teachers to use them.

Supporters of alternative assessments argue that rapid developments and improvements are being made in these forms of assessments, and that these problems of reliability, validity, and bias will therefore be overcome. Regarding costs, they acknowledge that these new assessments will require an initial investment of resources. Nonetheless, they emphasize that methods of assessment strongly shape what is taught and how. Thus, they believe that the initial investment will pay off over time, with improved instruction, curriculum, and most importantly, higher achievement by all students.

## 3. Exploring a Mix of Assessment Techniques

Assessments in Chapter 1 must serve several purposes. These range from accountability to the federal government to helping teachers to figure out each student's strengths and needs, and the kinds of programs and instruction that will best serve that student.

No one method of assessment necessarily can or has to satisfy all of these purposes. However, if school systems continue, at least in the short run, to rely on some form of standardized tests for accountability purposes, they still must start exploring new types of tests and other alternative assessments that will lead to a stronger curriculum, and give schools and parents the information they need about all of their students.

## 4. What You Can Do

- Find out what tests are given to Chapter 1 children and how the test results are used.

- Become involved in your school district's decisions about how it will evaluate students and the Chapter 1 program. This is your right by law.

- Point out the problems with the heavy use of standardized tests, and encourage your school district to reexamine its use of them.
- Initiate the debate about whether certain instruments are good measures of skills.
- Learn about the growing number of assessment alternatives around the country. With this information, you will be better able to influence the testing system in your school.
- Work with your school system to develop and select methods of assessment that can adequately demonstrate the extent to which Chapter 1 children have mastered the basic and more advanced skills expected of all children.

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*Note:* This chapter has drawn from the following publications:

Hopfenberg, W.S., H.M. Levin, G. Meister, & J. Rogers, *Accelerated Schools,* Paper excerpted from larger paper, Accelerated Schools Project, Center for Educational Research, Stanford University School of Education, Stanford, CA, 1990.

Knapp, M.S., & B.J. Turnbull, *Summary, Study of Academic Instruction for Disadvantaged Students - Better Schooling for the Children of Poverty: Alternatives to Conventional Wisdom,* Vol. 1, Prepared for the U.S. Department of Education, SRI International, Menlo Park, CA, and Policy Studies Associates, Washington, DC, Jan., 1990.

Madden, N.A., R.E. Slavin, N.L. Karweit, L. Dolan, & B.A. Wasik, "Success for All," *Phi Delta Kappan,* Vol. 72, No. 8, pp. 593-606, April, 1991.

Means, B. & M.S. Knapp, (eds.), *Teaching Advanced Skills to Educationally Disadvantaged Students,* Final Report, Prepared for the U.S. Department of Education, SRI International, Menlo Park, CA, and Policy Studies Associates, Washington, DC, March, 1991.

Moore, M.T. & J. Funkhouser, *More Time to Learn, Extended Time Strategies for Chapter 1 Students,* Prepared for the U.S. Department of Education, Decision Resources Corporation, Washington, DC, Jan., 1990.

The National Center for Fair & Open Testing (FairTest), *Standardized Tests and Our Children: A Guide to Testing Reform,* Cambridge, MA, Winter, 1990.

Pogrow, S., "What to Do About Chapter 1: An Alternative View From the Street," *Phi Delta Kappan*, Vol. 73, No. 8, pp. 624-630, April, 1992.

Research & Training Associates, Inc., *Chapter 1 Alternative Models*, Region D Chapter 1 Technical Assistance Center, Overland, KS.

RMC Research Corporation, *Chapter 1 Service Delivery Alternatives: A Model-Building Approach*, Region 1 Rural Technical Assistance Center, Hampton, NH.

Slavin, R.E. & N.A. Madden, *Modifying Chapter 1 Program Improvement Guidelines to Reward Appropriate Practices*, Center for Research on Effective Schooling for Disadvantaged Students, Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, MD, June, 1991.

Slavin, R.E. & N.A. Madden, "What Works for Students at Risk: A Research Synthesis," *Educational Leadership*, Feb., 1989, pp. 4-13.

Terry-Godt, P.R., *Effective Practices Specialty Option Year One Focus, Chapter 1 Service Delivery Models*, Effective Practices: Identification and Dissemination Specialty Option, Chapter 1 Technical Assistance Centers, Indianapolis, IN, 1992.

Turnbull, B.J., *Testing in Chapter 1: Issues and Options*, Written for the National Assessment of Chapter 1 Independent Review Panel, Policy Studies Associates, Washington, DC, July, 1991.

## Techniques for Improving the Achievement of Disadvantaged Students

The search for new Chapter 1 program designs has developed, in part, because of the changing ideas about how schools can best educate disadvantaged children. Although these new ideas are not set in stone, there is increasing evidence of their importance for both Chapter 1 programs and overall school programs. Among these ideas are that schools must:

- Assume that all children can learn and be successful in school.
- Focus on children's strengths and not their weaknesses. Build on these strengths.
- Use more flexible and temporary ability group arrangements. Mix children of different achievement levels as much as possible. Move away from tracking and ability grouping, where students are divided into separate classes or groups based on their perceived ability. Eliminate all low tracks which do not teach the more advanced skills that all children need to learn.
- Focus earlier on higher order thinking skills, such as reading comprehension, mathematical reasoning, and written composition. Do not just teach discrete basic skills to children and assume that they must master all the basic skills before learning higher order skills.
- Provide all students with meaningful and complex tasks, real-world problems to solve, and opportunities to learn and apply skills in context.
- Increase the coordination among different programs in the school. All staff of the school must meet to discuss and plan their overall programs and each student's individual program.
- Experiment with forms of teaching in the classroom that vary from teacher-directed instruction. Figure out ways to make students more responsible for their learning, to give them the chance to develop and solve academic problems for themselves, and to use their classmates as a learning resource.
- Try to develop a more project-oriented, cross-disciplinary curriculum.

*Note*: Many of these ideas come from Knapp, M.S., & B.J. Turnbull, *Better Schooling for the Children of Poverty*, Jan., 1990; and Means, B. & M.S. Knapp, (eds.), *Teaching Advanced Skills to Educationally Disadvantaged Students*, March, 1991. (See Note, page 66.)

# VII ▪ CHECKLISTS OF THINGS THAT MAY GO WRONG

## A. HOW TO DETERMINE WHETHER THE QUALITY OF THE CHAPTER 1 PROGRAM IS INADEQUATE

☐ Low-income and/or low-achieving students are subject to low expectations. The schools are not setting high goals for these students.

☐ The school system is not figuring out the "basic and advanced skills" that it thinks all children must learn. It is not making these skills the goals of the Chapter 1 program.

☐ The children in the Chapter 1 program are not getting enough from the program; the Chapter 1 program does not help them learn the skills that every child should know.

☐ The school system is not taking steps -- with parents -- to improve the Chapter 1 programs that are not helping the students. It has not developed an effective process of "program improvement."

☐ The school system has also not developed an adequate process for changing the programs of those individual Chapter 1 students who are failing to make enough progress.

☐ The school system has not re-examined the design of its Chapter 1 program, even though the program is not working well enough.

☐ There is not enough high-quality coordination of the Chapter 1 program and the regular program. Chapter 1 teachers and the regular teachers are not planning their programs together. The Chapter 1 students have a different curriculum in the Chapter 1 program and the regular program.

☐ Chapter 1 students are often "tracked" or separated into their own group in the regular program classes. These tracks or groups are designed for low-ability children, and provide a weaker curriculum to the students.

- Chapter 1 students receive an education that has too much repetitive drill. This is true in both the Chapter 1 program and the regular program. For example, students are asked only to read words or sentences, not whole stories or understand meaning. They do continual addition and subtraction, but do not apply mathematics to problem solving. There is not enough reasoning, writing, interpretation, and decision making.

- The schools and school districts rely too much on multiple choice tests to select students and evaluate the Chapter 1 programs. These tests do not tell enough about what students actually know. Instruction focuses too heavily on preparing children for these tests.

- The schools are not meeting the needs of Chapter 1 children who also have disabilities or are limited English proficient. For example, schools are not using tests that are valid for these populations. Schools are also confusing needs related to disabilities or language problems with needs related to academic achievement problems, and are not working to make the Chapter 1 program fit with the bilingual or special education programs.

## B. HOW TO DETERMINE IF THERE IS INADEQUATE PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

- The school system does not have a written parental involvement policy. Or if it does, the policy does not adequately address how parents will be involved "in all aspects of the program."

- The parental involvement policy is largely ignored. The school system does not effectively distribute it to parents and staff.

- The school system -- with parent input -- does not determine, each year, how well the parent involvement activities are working. It does not make changes to improve the parental involvement program when changes are necessary.

- Parents are not involved in the major decisions about the Chapter 1 program. For example, they do not help set goals for the program. They do not help shape the program's design. They are not involved in evaluating the program to see if it is working well.

- Parents are not involved in developing the local application for Chapter 1 funds.

- Parents are not given accurate information about the Chapter 1 program, its requirements, and their rights. The annual meeting does not accomplish this. There are not regular meetings, written materials, and reports to give parents adequate information throughout the year.

☐ When parents do provide input, it is largely ignored.

☐ Parents do not have ready access to principals, teachers, and other school staff.

☐ Parents do not have enough opportunity to meet with school people, and sit in on the Chapter 1 classes and activities.

☐ Parents are not helped to work with their children at home. They do not receive the materials and training to enable them to better help their children succeed in the Chapter 1 program.

☐ Parents are not allowed to form organizations of their own choosing, or to elect their representatives to district or state level groups.

☐ The schools do not provide parents with "reasonable support" for these organizations and other parent activities.

☐ Parents with limited reading ability, limited English speaking ability, or other special needs are not fully informed about the program. They are also not involved in the parent involvement activities.

## C. HOW TO DETERMINE WHETHER THE SCHOOL SYSTEM IS MISUSING CHAPTER 1 FUNDS

☐ More state and local funds are spent in non-Chapter 1 schools than in Chapter 1 schools.

☐ The school system is using Chapter 1 money either to pay entirely for a program that substitutes for the program the students would otherwise receive with regular dollars or to provide a program to Chapter 1 students which it would otherwise provide with local money. This is called "supplanting."

☐ The resources in Chapter 1 schools are not "comparable" with the resources in non-Chapter 1 schools.

☐ Chapter 1 funds are not just being used for those students that are eligible for Chapter 1 services; instead the money is being spent on all students in the school, even those whose achievement is fine.

☐ The schools are not receiving their Chapter money at the beginning of the school year. Therefore, the Chapter 1 program does not start on time.

## D. HOW TO DETERMINE WHETHER THE STATE IS PLAYING ITS PROPER ROLE IN THE CHAPTER 1 PROGRAMS

☐ The state does not adequately monitor programs and require corrections of violations.

☐ The state has not developed and carried out adequate fiscal control and fund accounting procedures.

☐ The state has not established and publicized complaint procedures for parents and others.

☐ The state does not offer good Chapter 1 technical assistance -- that is training and information -- to school systems, staff, and parents.

☐ The state is not adequately evaluating the quality of the Chapter 1 programs every two years as it is required to do.

☐ The state has not engaged in "joint planning" with school systems, schools, and parents to improve Chapter 1 programs that have not resulted in adequate improvement after two years.

# VIII ▪ WHAT YOU CAN DO TO CORRECT CHAPTER 1 PROBLEMS OR VIOLATIONS

You may find that your school or local school district is running the Chapter 1 program in a way that violates the Chapter 1 statute or regulations. For example, you might believe that Chapter 1 funds are being used to help all students in a school (general aid) rather than to provide extra help to low-achieving students. Or you might have identified, through the checklist in the last chapter, other specific problems with the Chapter 1 program that must be addressed.

You could choose among several strategies to address these problems. Some are cooperative, meaning that parents and school officials work together to understand the problems and implement solutions. Other strategies are confrontational, meaning that parents and school officials do not agree about what the problems are and/or cannot work together to remedy them. Although you do not necessarily have to start with a cooperative strategy, it is usually better to assume that there will be cooperation and make your initial response positive and constructive, rather than negative and threatening.

Before pursuing any strategy, however, you will need to have adequate knowledge about the Chapter 1 law, particularly about your rights of involvement, and your children's rights to quality Chapter 1 programs.

## A. COOPERATIVE STRATEGIES THAT ARE *INFORMAL*

### 1. When To Use Them

- if you have a good working relationship with the school system,

or

- if a local school official, the school board, or the school seems, generally, to take favorable action when parents raise a problem,

or

- if the school system or school has made it clear that it wants to cooperate in improving the Chapter 1 program and has the knowledge and expertise to do so,

or

▸ if good will is present, but the school or school system has inadequate knowledge or fixed attitudes about addressing the problem.

### 2. Examples of What You Can Do

- Either alone, or with other parents, bring up the problem orally at the annual Chapter 1 meeting or at another Chapter 1 meeting.

- Either alone, or with other parents, write a letter about this issue to: the local district's Chapter 1 director, the district's superintendent, the school board, the principal, or all of these persons.

- Work to establish a group of parents who support what you would like to do. Remember that you are always stronger if you are part of a group.

- Work to establish a training program for parents, teachers, and/or principals to provide more information about the Chapter 1 program and its requirements.

## B. COOPERATIVE STRATEGIES THAT ARE *FORMAL*

### 1. When To Use Them

▸ under the conditions described in A.1 (Cooperative Strategies That Are Informal, When To Use Them),

and

▸ if there is real potential and readiness to address the issues,

and

▸ if you have a sufficiently independent voice to have a cooperative and equal relationship with the school or school district.

### 2. Examples of What You Can Do

- Set up a joint committee at the school or district level. This committee could, for example, review and strengthen the district's Chapter 1 policies, develop proper desired outcomes, conduct a needs assessment of the Chapter 1 program, develop a district-wide or school level staff development plan, bring additional technical expertise into the district and/or examine the barriers to parent involvement, and work to remove them.

- Commission a fact finding or research effort.

- Develop a formal timeline and process of communication and decision making with the school district and/or one or more school(s).

- Provide policy recommendations to your school district with a series of recommended steps for them to take.

## C. CONFRONTATIONAL STRATEGIES THAT ARE *INFORMAL*

### 1. When To Use Them

▸ if the cooperative methods failed to work,

or

▸ if you have tried to work with the school system on other issues, but it has consistently failed to cooperate,

or

▸ if the problem is the type that demands a more confrontational stance from the start,

*but*

▸ you do not yet want to use a more formal confrontational strategy such as filing a formal complaint or suing the school system. You think that this would create hostility between parents and school employees and hurt overall parental involvement.

### 2. Examples of What You Can Do

- Deliver to the school system a petition signed by a large number of parents stating your grievance and demanding redress.

- Mobilize parents into a more formal organization specifically to confront the school system on this problem.

- Get the assistance of a legal services lawyer or other local advocate. He or she can contact the school system on your behalf and work with you to address the problem with informal means.

- Assert your legal rights under the law, and threaten to use legal strategies if the school system does not remedy the problem.

## D. CONFRONTATIONAL STRATEGIES THAT ARE *FORMAL*

### 1. When To Use Them

▸ if the informal confrontation strategies have failed,

or

▸ if there are diametrically opposed positions,

or

▸ if all forms of communication have already broken down,

or

▸ if the school district or school is operating the Chapter 1 program with blatant disregard of the law and the needs of its students.

### 2. Examples of What You Can Do

- Start a complaint procedure. Through this procedure you file a written "complaint" with either the local school system or the state department of education. In this complaint, you state how local or state officials have violated a legal requirement of the Chapter 1 program. One parent, many parents, or an organization can submit the complaint. If you do not have a copy of the state's complaint procedure for Chapter 1, call or write the district superintendent's office or the state department of education. (See "How The Complaint Procedure Works," below.)

- Sue the school system or the state in court. You may want to do this if conditions are extremely bad or your attempts to solve the problem by other methods have already failed. While in some situations you may want to start a complaint procedure before bringing a suit, this is not always necessary or advisable. You will need a lawyer for legal action. (See "Bringing A Case In Court," below.)

*Note*: For all confrontational strategies, you will need to have copies of any correspondence, minutes of meetings, and any other supporting and factual written documents that relate to your complaint or problem.

## How The Complaint Procedure Works

The Chapter 1 regulations require state education officials to have a formal complaint system. Through this system, you can complain formally about violations that you think are occurring in the Chapter 1 program and seek a remedy.

### Who May File a Complaint

An organization or one or more individuals may file a complaint.

### What the Complaint Must Contain

- This complaint must be written and signed.
- It must contain a statement that local or state officials have violated a legal requirement of the Chapter 1 program, with mention of the legal provision.
- It must have a summary of the facts which form the basis of the complaint.
- It should have attached copies of any correspondence, minutes of meetings, and other supporting documents that relate to the complaint.

### Where the Complaint Should be Filed

This depends on the substance of the complaint. If it concerns improper conduct by local employees, it can be filed with the local school system or directly at the state department of education. A complaint of improper conduct by state employees should be filed with the state department of education.

If you file the complaint with the local system and they reject it (or fail to decide the question), you may appeal to the state department of education. *(continued)*

## How The Complaint Procedure Works *(continued)*

### The State's Responsibilities

Once the state department of education has responsibility over the complaint, it has several obligations. State officials may conduct an "on-site investigation" if they think it is necessary. Whether they do an on-site investigation or not, the state should "resolve the complaint" no later than "60 calendar days" after it is received.

### The Right to Appeal

You have the right to appeal the decision of the local system to the state department of education. If you are not satisfied with the way that state employees resolve a complaint, you have the right to request the United States Secretary of Education to review the state's final decision.

### Securing Help in the Complaint Process

Parents can ask a legal services attorney to help them prepare and follow up on a complaint. Parents (or their representatives) should secure any local or state rules for the handling of complaints because these rules might provide helpful procedural rights. Remember that it is almost always more effective if parents join together in making a complaint.

## Bringing A Case In Court

The Chapter 1 statute does not mention that parents can sue the school system or the state if they do not obey the Chapter 1 law. However, it is likely that the court will accept the suit and enforce many of the requirements of Chapter 1.

The federal statute which is key to parents' rights is 42 United States Code, Section 1983. This statute allows you to sue a local or state employee who violates rights granted to you by a federal law, such as Chapter 1.

If you want to bring a case in court to enforce Chapter 1, you will need a legal services lawyer or other lawyer. To find a lawyer, call up the local legal aid or legal services program in your community, and explain to them the help you need.

Once you find a lawyer, tell him or her about this handbook and the Center for Law and Education's National Chapter 1 Advocacy Project. They will also be interested in knowing about the following decisions that courts have made in the past: *Wright v. City of Roanoke Redevelopment and Housing Authority;*[1] *Wilder v. Virginia Hospital Association;*[2] *Valdez v. Grover;*[3] and *Nicholson v. Pittenger.*[4] Significantly, in *Nicholson v. Pittenger,* the court ordered the school district to stop funding Chapter 1 programs that had been proven to be ineffective.

If a court finds that school officials have violated a Chapter 1 requirement, it will order the officials to comply with the law. It could also require other steps to make sure that the officials provide effective relief. For example, it may require notice to Chapter 1 parents and a report to the court of the steps taken to comply.

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1. 479 U.S. 418 (1987) (general standards for such private right of action claims).
2. 496 U.S. 498 (1990).
3. 563 F. Supp. 129 (W.D. Wisc. 1983) (§1983 claim to enforce requirement of consultation with parents in Chapter 1 migrant program).
4. 364 F. Supp. 669 (E.D. Penn. 1973).

# IX ▪ HOW TO INITIATE LONGER-TERM ADVOCACY EFFORTS TO IMPROVE THE OVERALL CHAPTER 1 PROGRAM

## A. SUMMARY

Suggestions and ideas in this section come from the experiences of the Center for Law and Education's National Chapter 1 Advocacy Project. Through this project, legal services organizations, other community advocates, and active parents around the country are coming together in their communities not only to work on particular problems in their Chapter 1 programs, but also to initiate longer-term Chapter 1 advocacy efforts. These efforts involve the development and implementation of a range of strategies to improve the quality of the Chapter 1 programs in their schools.

Below are the types of steps that are being taken by these groups to initiate their efforts, in the order in which these steps are frequently (although by no means always) taken. Although these steps in no way exclude others, they provide a starting point for those interested in longer-term involvement in Chapter 1.

As these steps suggest, sustained Chapter 1 advocacy will frequently require advocates to view themselves as advocates in the broadest sense of the word, explore a range of non-traditional legal strategies, and work to forge, wherever possible, new kinds of collaborations within the community, and between school and community. These efforts also will involve new forays into those substantive educational areas that affect both the quality of the Chapter 1 programs and the overall school program for low-income, low-achieving students.

**Summary of Initial Steps in Chapter 1 Advocacy**

1. Identify and establish contact with community groups, parent groups, and other active parents.
2. Gather information about the Chapter 1 and parental involvement programs in your schools.
3. Work to create a Chapter 1 Advocacy Team.
4. Identify potential allies in the school system and enlist their support.
5. Establish initial area(s) of focus and priorities.
6. Develop initial strategies.
7. Build your understanding about high quality Chapter 1 programs and parental involvement programs.

In reality, throughout all of these steps you will want to build your understanding not only about the type of information contained in step 7, but also about the Chapter 1 law, regulations, and policy manual, common problems with Chapter 1 programs across the country, and possible ways for you to address these problems.

## B. INITIAL STEPS

### 1. IDENTIFY AND ESTABLISH CONTACT WITH COMMUNITY GROUPS, PARENT GROUPS, AND OTHER ACTIVE PARENTS

Determine the community organizations, parents' groups, and other active parents in your community. Contact them and tell them more about who you are, and why you are interested in becoming involved in Chapter 1 advocacy. Determine their interest in becoming involved, and seek additional names from them.

Do not limit your contacts to those that you know are already involved in education issues. A wide range of groups, organizations, and institutions may be interested in becoming involved or at least serving as a resource for you. These include churches, tenant councils, community development corporations, youth organizations, community action agencies, Head Start, the Urban League, civil rights organizations, legal services organizations, universities, and other local advocacy groups.

Establishing these initial contacts will help you to get the additional information you will need (step 2), form an advocacy team (step 3), and work toward sustained parent involvement.

### 2. GATHER INFORMATION ABOUT THE CHAPTER 1 PROGRAMS IN YOUR SCHOOLS, AND THE PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT PROGRAMS

Information gathering is essential both as an initial step and an ongoing process. You want to learn more about what is currently happening in the Chapter 1 programs in your schools, as well as discover the extent and effectiveness of the parental involvement. This information will help you identify the problems that may exist, determine your areas of focus, and decide upon your initial strategies to combat these problems (steps 5 and 6).

Pursue two avenues to obtain this information. First, obtain the key written documents on your Chapter 1 programs. Second, talk to those who know about how the programs are actually working in practice.

### a. The CHAPTER 1 Documents

On the following page is a list of the key Chapter 1 documents that you will want to get:[*]

- the local Chapter 1 application

  The LEA's Chapter 1 application is the most important document to get. This application, submitted by each LEA to the state to receive funds, describes, among other things, the type of Chapter 1 programs the LEA will conduct in its Chapter 1 schools; participating schools and eligible children; the desired outcomes for the programs; evaluation methods; and the parental involvement program.

  Frequently, there is also a more detailed application or plan for each Chapter 1 school; you will want to obtain these documents for those schools on which you might focus.

- local and state rules, guidelines, or similar documents for the administration of the Chapter 1 program

- program improvement documents

  Ask for the list of schools in program improvement, their program improvement plans, and, if one exists, the state's educational program improvement plan for implementing the program improvement provisions.

- schoolwide project documents

  Ask for the list of schools with schoolwide projects (if not included in the LEA's application), as well as schoolwide project plans for any school on which you might focus.

- the parental involvement policy

- overall curriculum goals and achievement standards in each subject area and grade level

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[*] You will also need a complete set of Chapter 1 legal documents, including the law, regulations, and Policy Manual. (See Appendix A for the full listing of these documents.)

These are non-Chapter 1 documents that your school, school district, and/or your state may have developed. These documents will help you to evaluate the Chapter 1 programs and their desired outcomes.

- evaluation results for the district and any school on which you might want to focus.

Those to whom you can turn to obtain these documents include:

- the school district (which is called the local education agency (LEA) in the law)

  In each school district there is usually a Chapter 1 office which is in charge of developing most of these documents. By law, it must make these documents readily available, upon request.

- the state education authority (SEA), which reviews the LEAs' Chapter 1 applications and keeps them on file
- a Chapter 1 parent group or other involved parents
- other school personnel.

In addition to the documents listed above, there are many others. But it is often a good idea to postpone the rest of your document requests until you get more involved in your advocacy efforts. First, these initial documents contain most of the initial information that you will need in order to get started. In addition, starting out by asking for a huge laundry list of documents can make administrators unnecessarily defensive, increase potential resistance, and jeopardize cooperative relations.

These documents, however, are all public documents which, by law, should be readily available on request. Therefore, if necessary, you can make a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request (or "public records" request, in some states) to obtain them.

### b. Learn More About How the CHAPTER 1 Program Is Working in Practice

Although these written materials, particularly the LEA's Chapter 1 application to the state, will contain important information about Chapter 1, they will not answer such key questions as: How do the Chapter 1 programs work in practice? How effective are they? What are their problems? Are parents really involved? If so, how?

The people most likely able to help you answer these questions include:

- individual parents and existing parents' groups;
- school district personnel (both in and outside of Chapter 1);
- school personnel, including principals, regular teachers, Chapter 1 teachers, counselors, and Chapter 1 parent liaison personnel;
- students;
- community organizations.

In addition to talking with these groups, you might want to send out a brief survey to parent groups and other community organizations to determine how much involvement there is in Chapter 1, and what problems exist.

### c. Key Areas on Which to Focus Your Information Gathering

In gathering your information, pay particular attention to the following areas:

- the desired outcomes for Chapter 1 programs

  Are they expressed in terms of the basic and more advanced skills that all children are expected to master?

- the design of the Chapter 1 programs

  Are they pull-out programs, in-class programs, extended day programs, schoolwide projects, etc?
  Are the programs designed in ways that best enable the students to master the desired outcomes?

- the extent of coordination of the Chapter 1 programs and the regular program

  Do all students have the same curricula and books?
  Is less expected of Chapter 1 children?
  Are they separated from other children in their regular classes?

- the methods of evaluation of the programs

- the programs' effectiveness
- the steps taken to improve schools identified for program improvement

  Are the schools making program improvement changes that have the greatest likelihood of improving the performance of the Chapter 1 children?

- the extent and effectiveness of the parental involvement programs, both at the district and school level

  Are parents involved every step of the way, as the law requires?

- the state's role in setting standards for the Chapter 1 program, and in program improvement.

Remember, it is not necessary for you to obtain all of this information before getting started. Information gathering will necessarily be an ongoing process throughout your advocacy efforts.

## 3. WORK TO CREATE A CHAPTER 1 ADVOCACY TEAM

If you are interested in developing a sustained effort in your community to improve the Chapter 1 programs in your schools, you should strongly consider developing a widely-representative, broad-based local Chapter 1 Advocacy Team which can take charge of determining the shape of these efforts. Although the exact membership and size of the team will inevitably vary from community to community, depending on its context and the possibilities, possible members include:

- parents (who should be involved from the beginning);
- legal services attorneys;
- other community advocates;
- high school students;
- private attorneys and other private sector resources;
- other interested community members;

- supportive school personnel who are committed advocates for children and their parents (from the school, district, or state level) (see step 4);

- those with greater technical expertise, such as members of the local colleges or universities.

Such teams can ensure that a range of experiences, knowledge, and resources are brought to bear in developing and implementing the strategies to solve the problems with Chapter 1. They also increase the likelihood that your efforts will have greater impact.

Including one or more supportive school staff members on the advocacy team can help break down common barriers between school and community, and between advocacy from outside the school and implementation from within. They may lend valuable expertise to the team, and bolster the team's credibility in the eyes of both the school and community.

While the team as a whole can develop and implement the advocacy strategies, one person or organization usually must take the lead in organizing the team's regular meetings, developing the meetings' agenda, and maintaining the team's momentum.

## 4. IDENTIFY POTENTIAL ALLIES IN THE SCHOOL SYSTEM AND ENLIST THEIR SUPPORT

Identify the key players in the Chapter 1 programs and beyond, and determine whether they are potential allies or at least supportive of your efforts. This will help you decide your initial areas of focus (step 5), as well as your initial strategies (step 6). Relevant players include:

- members of the board of education;
- the superintendent;
- school district central office personnel (LEA);
- principals;
- Chapter 1 coordinators;
- regular teachers and Chapter 1 teachers;
- parent liaison staff;
- instructional aides.

## 5. ESTABLISH INITIAL AREA(S) OF FOCUS AND PRIORITIES

After gathering information, establishing an advocacy team, identifying people in the school system who might support the team, and identifying the central problems with Chapter 1 in your schools, you will be in a position to determine initial areas of focus and priorities.

The effectiveness of Chapter 1 programs is determined by decisions and activities at three levels -- the district level, the school level, and the state level (although the state currently plays a smaller role in Chapter 1). Therefore, it is likely that your team will want to pursue a multi-level strategy to improve the Chapter 1 programs.

For example, you may elect to concentrate on the Chapter 1 programs in a handful of schools, as well as to address problems with district-level policy; you may choose to address the manner in which the state and the district are carrying out their responsibilities under the law; or you may decide to start by primarily focusing on the area where you have identified potential school allies; regardless of your choice, however, you will usually need to address district-level policy at some point since the district currently makes the bulk of the decisions about the Chapter 1 programs.

Within your initial area(s) of focus, you will want to determine your priorities. Your information gathering, particularly from other parents, should inform these decisions.

## 6. DEVELOP INITIAL STRATEGIES

After your team has chosen its areas of focus and priorities, it can start devising its strategies to address these areas (also an ongoing process; your strategies may very well change as you proceed).

Clearly your initial strategies will depend on the amount of cooperation that you find. As discussed above, however, you always want to assume cooperation and make your initial efforts positive and constructive, not confrontational. This approach promises greater success, and longer lasting change. Only if your initial efforts are rebuffed should you start exploring more adversarial strategies.

For example, you could start by concentrating your assistance on a handful of schools in which the principals support change and want to work with your team. Your team could then work more closely with these schools to set the change process in motion in order to address problems that may exist and better involve parents. Or you might identify and work closely with a supportive Chapter 1 parent involvement coordinator and an existing Chapter 1 parent group to develop more effective parental involvement at the district level.

While cooperative strategies such as these are preferable, they are not always possible. If your requests for information are repeatedly denied, your cooperative approaches to the school and school district have failed, there is a history of conflict, or blatant disregard of the law and the needs of the students, your strategies will have to reflect this. Media and political strategies are possibilities. Complaint procedures and legal suits also are available to you, although you will clearly want to consider the range of possible consequences of such legal strategies before initiating them.

## 7. BUILD YOUR UNDERSTANDING ABOUT HIGH QUALITY CHAPTER 1 PROGRAMS AND PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT PROGRAMS

Many of the educational issues at the heart of Chapter 1 reform are at the center of overall school reform. The more you learn about these substantive education issues, the more effective you can be in Chapter 1 advocacy and any broader education advocacy effort. To get more information, you can turn to:

- education literature;
- the best Chapter 1 teachers, Chapter 1 coordinators, and regular teachers in the district;
- local colleges and universities;
- the technical assistance centers (See Appendix C);
- the state Chapter 1 coordinator.

# X ▪ ORGANIZATIONS AND RESOURCES THAT PARENTS CAN TURN TO FOR HELP

## A. LOCAL SOURCES OF HELP

If you feel that you need outside help in obtaining or enforcing your rights concerning Chapter 1, there are a variety of sources:

### 1. Legal Aid or Legal Services Programs

Get professional advice from attorneys and staff at the local legal aid or legal services program in your community (if low-income parents are involved).

### 2. Pro-bono attorneys

Ask the local, state, and federal bar associations about their pro bono programs. Through pro bono programs, private lawyers provide legal advice to low-income or non-profit organizations free or at little cost. Use the expertise of these private attorneys. [Most states require attorneys to spend a certain amount of time providing free legal assistance to low-income people. The bar associations are listed in the phone book under the name of the city or state.]

### 3. Local community organizations

Seek help from local community organizations, such as branches of the Urban League, local minority and ethnic organizations, the local PTA, etc.

### 4. Local businesses

Take advantage of services or donations available from local businesses. These services may include publishing newsletters and providing in-house professionals to help or train parents.

### 5. State department of education

Contact your State Department of Education. It is responsible for making sure that your local school district is complying with the statute. It must require school systems to correct violations.

## B. NATIONAL SOURCES OF HELP

1. **National Coalition of Title I/CHAPTER 1 Parents**

   Edmonds School Building
   9th & D Streets, NE
   Washington, DC 20002
   (202) 547-9286

2. **Center for Law and Education**

   National CHAPTER 1 Advocacy Project
   Center for Law and Education
   1875 Connecticut Ave., NW, Suite 510
   Washington, DC 20009
   (202) 986-3000; or

   955 Massachusetts Avenue
   Cambridge, MA 02139
   (617) 876-6611

3. **Department of Education, Office of Compensatory Education Programs**

   U.S. Department of Education
   Room 2043, FOB-6
   400 Maryland Avenue, SW
   Washington, DC 20202
   (202) 401-1682

4. **Other national organizations include:**

   - NAACP Legal Defense and Education Fund
   - National Council of La Raza
   - Parent-Teacher Associations
   - National Committee for Citizens in Education
   - National Urban League and local Urban League chapters

# XI ▪ HOW ADVOCATES CAN REACH AND ASSIST PARENTS

## A. HOW TO REACH PARENTS

There are a variety of ways for legal services programs and other advocates to make contact with Chapter 1 parents. Here are a few ideas:

- Some school districts have paid Chapter 1 parent coordinators who may be very helpful.
- There may be formal parent advisory councils, with parent officers, at the district or school level.
- The school or district may agree to include a notice from or about you in mailings to Chapter 1 parents.
- Request to speak and/or distribute information at the annual Chapter 1 parent meeting.
- The National Coalition of Title I/Chapter 1 Parents [Edmonds School Building, 9th & D Streets, NE, Washington, DC 20002, (202) 547-9286], may have members in your school district.
- Contact community groups and other organizations such as churches, civic organizations, civil rights groups, or youth organizations.
- Head Start programs may provide contacts with active parents.
- Draw on contacts with clients in other areas in which you work.

## B. HOW TO ASSIST PARENTS

There are a range of ways for you and your team to assist other parents to become more involved in Chapter 1 and develop sustained parent involvement in their schools.

### 1. Information

You can provide information to parents about the Chapter 1 law, the Chapter 1 programs in their schools, and how they can become involved to make Chapter 1 work for their children. You can also inform parents about other information that exists (perhaps distributed by the school), and help parents to get this information.

### 2. Training

You can provide parents with ongoing training so that they can take advantage of their rights of involvement. The training usually should focus on children's rights, parents' rights, and program requirements, especially as they relate to the quality of the programs. Such training can help prepare parents for the annual meetings and other meetings, for their role in the development of parent involvement policies, and in the design and implementation of the programs. Ongoing training can also provide parents with the important skills they may need to play a role in monitoring the programs and advocating for change.

Consider concentrating on preparing a core group of parent leaders to train and work with other parents. Research has demonstrated the efficacy of this type of involvement.

### 3. Support for parents' efforts to organize to carry out the requirements of the law

You can provide parents with the support they request for their efforts to organize so that they can fulfill the requirements of the parental involvement section of the law. Existing parent organizations frequently need ongoing support which you can also make available.

### 4. Liaison between parents and schools

You can serve as a liaison between parents and schools in order to bridge broken down lines of communication and support positive ones.

### 5. Collaboration on the development of goals

It may be important for you to work with parents on defining their goals; these goals not only can help sustain their involvement, but can become a means for organizing and involving other parents.

**6. Help on individual problems**

You can become an important resource to individual parents who need help on concrete problems facing their own children in the Chapter 1 program.

**7. Administrative complaints and legal actions**

Finally, you can aid parents in filing administrative complaints or developing legal actions, when necessary.

In most communities around the country in which parents have become successfully involved, information, training, and support have been key to their success. Remember that information, training, and support for Chapter 1 parents are required by the Chapter 1 law.

## C. ADDITIONAL IDEAS FOR PARENT TRAINING

### 1. Determining the Context

If you are going to lead a parent training session, and are trying to plan an appropriate training, start by asking several key questions:

1) Who is the audience?

Is it a group of new parents concerned about their own children? Chapter 1 parent leaders? A joint group of parents and Chapter 1 school staff (i.e., at the annual meeting)? School staff alone? Someone else?

2) How much background does your audience have in Chapter 1 and other school issues?

3) At what level is the training held -- the district or school level?

4) During what time of the year is the training held and for what purposes? (i.e., is this the annual meeting or another regular meeting? Is this meeting for information purposes or largely for the development of strategies?)

Use the answers to these questions to design the training most suitable for your audience and its level of knowledge.

## 2. Other Suggestions

1) Always start the training by introducing yourselves, telling why you are there, and asking everyone present to introduce themselves.

2) Try to meet in a neutral and easily accessible place in which the invited parents will not feel uncomfortable.

3) Try to get as much parent participation as possible during the meeting. Encourage parents to talk about what they want for their children, and how this may differ from what their children are actually getting.

4) Worry only about the parents who are there, not those who are not. This means that even if there is a low turn-out, proceed as planned. Make sure to make those parents who do show up feel important and involved.

5) Make your training as specific as possible to the context at hand. Refer to specific schools and people if possible. Get parents to contribute specific school experiences or problems.

6) Work to make the initial meeting spark interest in a follow-up meeting. Before closing, set the time and place for the next meeting. Try to involve at least some parents in setting the agenda for the next meeting.

7) Work continually with parents during the meeting to set concrete goals to pursue. Ask the kinds of questions (particularly regarding key issues affecting the quality of their children's education) and provide the types of information that will enable parents to understand what is possible and articulate what they really want for their children.

8) Learn about parents' concerns and interests, and what they want to do. Help them on what they want. If this means taking up something else first, such as report cards or a building problem, before delving into Chapter 1, this is okay. Frequently strong parent involvement begins with parent mobilization around a specific cause.

9) Work with the parents to develop a work plan and focus on strategies.

10) Emphasize the importance, especially with recalcitrant school personnel, of parents knowing their rights under law and presenting their concerns to schools through an organized parents' group.

11) Get feedback about the training.

# Appendix A

## Relevant Laws, Regulations and Guidelines

**The CHAPTER 1 Law**

20 U.S.C. §§ 2701 *et seq.*, the Augustus F. Hawkins-Robert T. Stafford Elementary and Secondary School Improvement Amendments of 1988, P.L. 100-297, (1988).

**The Conference Committee Report**

H.R. Conf. Rep. No. 567, 100th Cong., 2nd Sess. (1988).

**The House Committee Report**

H.R. Rep. No. 95, 100th Cong., 1st Sess. (1987).

**The Senate Committee Report**

S.R. Rep. No. 22, 100th Cong., 1st Sess. (1987).

**The CHAPTER 1 Regulations**

34 C.F.R. §§ 75, 76, 77, 78, 200, 204 (1989).

**The CHAPTER 1 Policy Manual**

Chapter 1 Policy Manual. U.S. Department of Education, Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, Compensatory Education Programs, April, 1990.

**State laws, regulations, and guidelines concerning**

i. Chapter 1
ii. Any state-funded compensatory education programs
iii. Basic state law requirements (e.g., in recent education reform statutes) concerning educational goals, required curriculum, graduation requirements, etc.

*Note:*

*"U.S.C."* stands for United States Code. This is a compilation and publication of the laws enacted by Congress. It includes the Chapter 1 law.
*"C.F.R."* stands for the Code of Federal Regulations. This is a compilation and publication of the regulations issued by agencies of the federal government. It includes Department of Education regulations implementing the Chapter 1 law.
"§" stands for "section," referring to a specific section of the law.

The federal laws and reports are available from the Senate or House Document Rooms, the Government Printing Office, or through your Representative or Senator. The Code of Federal Regulations is available for copying in most law offices, large libraries and federal regional buildings. The Chapter 1 Policy Manual should be in your school district office and at the state department of education, and can be copied. It is also available from the Government Printing Office.

## Appendix B

# Examples of CHAPTER 1 Programs and Parental Involvement Programs

Section 1 provides examples of strong and weak Chapter 1 programs, and Section 2 provides examples of strong and weak parental involvement programs. Some of the examples focus on the policies and practices at the district level, while others focus on school level programs. The last two examples include both levels. All examples are from actual programs.

## 1. THE CHAPTER 1 PROGRAM

### A. A Poorly Functioning Chapter 1 Program — the School District Level

This district currently operates Chapter 1 programs in twenty-eight of the thirty-five elementary schools, three junior high schools, and none of its high schools. Most of the funds are spent on pull-out programs to pay the salaries of Chapter 1 teachers and instructional aides. All of the schools, regardless of their specific needs, have reading and math pull-out programs. In some schools, the students miss their regular reading or math period, in others, their science or social studies block, to receive their Chapter 1 assistance.

The district has not identified desired outcomes for its Chapter 1 students in terms of the "basic and more advanced skills that all children are expected to master." Instead, it has set desired outcomes in terms of NCE gains - more specifically, 1 NCE gain through the Chapter 1 program. (See Chapter VI for an explanation of "NCE".)

The district uses the California Achievement Test (CAT) - a standardized norm-referenced test - to evaluate whether this gain has been satisfied. It also uses the CAT test to assess all students and identify those with the greatest educational deprivation.

Although the Chapter 1 students do tend to make the 1 NCE gain each year, they generally are not catching up with their classmates nor succeeding in their regular school programs.

## B. A Poorly Functioning Chapter 1 Program — the School Level

This school spends most of its Chapter 1 funds on the salaries of teachers and aides to staff reading pull-out programs for Chapter 1 students in grades two through six. Chapter 1 students are taken out of their regular reading class for these services, which last thirty minutes each day. During the pull-out class, the children usually complete work sheets that cover basic reading skills. The Chapter 1 teachers meet with the regular teachers once a semester to coordinate their instruction and materials.

The school's desired outcomes for its Chapter 1 programs echo its district's - a 1 NCE gain each year in the program. Members of the school, along with parents, have never sat down together to determine their own goals for their Chapter 1 programs, nor tried to design the type of Chapter 1 programs that really would help the children succeed in school. In fact, the school tends to have much lower expectations for its Chapter 1 children - expectations which also carry over into the regular classroom.

Although the Chapter 1 students are typically in the Chapter 1 program for three years, they continue to fall further behind their classmates.

## C. A Well-Functioning Chapter 1 Program — the School District Level

The district decided that its students could not succeed unless high goals were set for all of them, including those in the Chapter 1 program. Through a series of discussions, administrators, teachers, and parents jointly figured out what they wanted all children to know. They did not start from scratch, but with existing state and local edicts that describe what all children should know. These statements and their own discussions became the basis for developing their own desired outcomes for the Chapter 1 program.

The district also concluded that its existing "one-size-fits-all" pull-out programs created a stigma on children, failed to meet varying needs, and did not adequately raise student achievement. With strong input from the schools and parents, and a carefully conducted needs assessment, the district redesigned the Chapter 1 programs.

The Chapter 1 programs now vary from school to school, to respond to each school's different problems. For example, one school now devotes most of its money to an intensive reading prevention program in grades one through three. It involves extra in-class reading specialists, and after-school tutoring for those most in need of additional help. Another elementary school hired a math resource teacher who is working with regular classroom teachers to improve children's reasoning skills, and a paraprofessional who is training the parents of pre-kindergarten and kindergarten children with developmental delays on how to improve their children's readiness for academic learning.

To ensure that the programs make a real difference, the district limits the number of schools that it serves and emphasizes the use of Chapter 1 funds for staff development.

### D. A Well-Functioning Chapter 1 Program - the School District Level

This school district has reformed its Chapter 1 program so that it is now strong in direct service to children, staff development, and parental involvement.

The district now spends one tenth of the dollars that it previously spent on pull-out programs. It invests heavily in after-school, Saturday, summer, and home study programs, as well as early childhood programs. It has also phased out many of the instructional aides and replaced them with fully certified teachers.

The district has shifted the emphasis of the Chapter 1 programs from grammar to communication, from computation to thinking, from focusing on deficits to focusing on the strengths of children and their prior learning experiences. It has supported the efforts of schools as they abandon old reading texts in favor of regular literature books, and replace old writing workbooks with experimental ones. It has also worked closely with schools to integrate their reading and writing instruction into a coherent whole. There also is increasing collaboration among children, and between teachers and children within the classrooms.

An extensive staff development program, primarily funded by Chapter 1, has enabled the teachers to implement these changes. The district has developed its own trainers by drawing on some of the strongest teachers in the system. These teachers conduct training for other teachers that have three major components: 1) presenting the research on effective instruction and curriculum; 2) demonstrating effective practices to the teachers within their own classrooms; and 3) watching the teachers try the new techniques and giving them feedback.

The district has developed an expanded version of "Parents as Partners," run by the parents themselves. There are also staff who make frequent home visits and work with the schools to make sure that parents are continually invited back to the school and made to feel welcome. As a result, parents have become far more engaged in the learning of their children, and in overall school activities.

### E. A Well-Functioning Chapter 1 Program — the School Level

In 1989, a leadership committee from this school, consisting of school staff, district administrators, parents, and the principal, made the commitment to become a schoolwide project and designed a program for the school. They developed a plan that focused on eliminating pull-out programs; improving teacher effectiveness through staff development; raising the self-esteem and attendance rates of students; improving writing skills and overall achievement; and increasing parent and community involvement in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of the program.

By the end of the 1990-1991 school year, the school had set in motion dramatic transformations. The kindergarten program implemented an Early Prevention of School Failure project, and provided orientation sessions for children coming from Head Start to help them make the transition to kindergarten.

Pull-out programs were eliminated. Class sizes were reduced by reassigning three existing Chapter 1 teachers and an instructional assistant. The school adopted a "whole language approach," combining instruction of reading, writing, listening, and communication. It also more fully integrated language arts into other subject areas, created two computer labs, and set up learning centers in every classroom. State bilingual education funds were used to pay for tutors for the ESL (English as a Second Language) students. Other categorical grants were used to provide additional tutors in the classroom, as well as to staff an after-school tutorial program. A summer school was established at the school for all children in the district.

The school initiated an extensive staff development program that incorporated comprehensive needs assessments, workshops, and individual professional development plans. In addition, the leadership committee developed incentives programs to motivate students to attend school and improve their achievement.

The school also increased significantly its efforts to involve parents and the community. Parent workshops and conferences were held in community centers. The school sent home daily bulletins, weekly newsletters, and monthly activity calendars. In addition, home visits were made in the younger grades, and parents were frequently invited into the school.

A journal article on these changes described the Chapter 1 schoolwide project as the central vehicle for transforming the school from one "characterized by apathy, poor achievement, and low self-esteem, to one of pride, high expectations, improved student performance, and increased parent and community involvement." It mentioned several factors that contributed to this success. First was the freedom to combine categorical funds, which enabled the school to address the needs of all students in a systematic and efficient way; second was the extensive technical assistance received from the Chapter 1 Regional Technical Assistance Center; third was the strong leadership and strategic planning on the part of all groups involved.

## F. A Well-Functioning CHAPTER 1 Program — the School Level

Several years ago, this school decided to become part of the Accelerated Schools Project, a nationwide school reform project based at Stanford University in California. At that time, the school set as its goal bringing all of its students up to grade level by the end of elementary school. Since then, it has implemented collaborative decision making, an enriched curriculum that involves language development in all subjects, and instruction that emphasizes active learning and independent problem-solving. The school believes that for its students to catch up to more privileged students, their learning must be "accelerated," to prevent them from falling further and further behind.

The school began this process of acceleration by bringing together the entire school community -- teachers, staff, administration, students, parents, and local residents. The school community took stock of the situation and developed a unified vision for what it wanted the school to be in the future. Drawing on this information, it developed priority areas that included school improvement, staff development, curriculum, and parent involvement. It formed task forces for each area which met weekly to address the challenges and develop proposals, and a steering committee to link the task forces together.

Classrooms in this school bear the mark of a dramatically improved overall school. For example, during several weeks of school, one third grade classroom has been turned into a ship -- students have to cross a gang-plank to enter. There is sailors' equipment everywhere. During one week, students "sail" to Antarctica. A section of the floor has become the continent of Antarctica, with icebergs, stuffed penguins, and seals. Every subject is being taught around the theme of Antarctica and its characteristics. For example, students do math problems that focus on temperatures of air and water, distances between different places on the continent, and sizes and weights of the animals there. Their writing assignments also revolve around the theme, taking the form of letters from Antarctica to family back home and stories about life in the cold. Students also create maps of Antarctica. Some students work with a student facilitator, others with a teacher or teacher aide, and still others with student teachers from the university. These grouping arrangements are short term and flexible.

The theme in another third grade classroom is Hawaii. There are posters of Hawaii, and the type of objects one would expect to see there. When they were second-graders, the students began selling popcorn in the school cafeteria, in pursuit of their goal to raise enough money to go to Hawaii. Their success led them to "set up a corporation" with the help of a visiting stockbroker. They sold shares, held stockholders meetings, and established a franchise with the fifth grade. When they moved to third grade, their second grade teacher moved with them. Now they continue to run their corporation, and perform those tasks that it requires -- preparing the supplies and equipment for the day's sales, doing the necessary accounting, and drawing the weekly sales curve.

In the bilingual kindergarten classrooms, bilingual classes are paired with English classes, and teachers work as a team. The children in these classes all learn to speak, read, write, and think in both languages. These classrooms are also part of a cross-age tutoring program where older children each have a "little buddy" that they sit and read with on a regular basis.

To boost the aspirations of its students, they are taken on field trips to the local middle school, high school, and to a university.

The classroom teachers used to rely on the basal reader guide, lecture-style classrooms, and "drill and kill" to teach their students. Their shift to thematic learning, language development, and active and interactive teaching and learning reveals the true success of the staff development and curriculum task forces in the school.

## 2. PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT PROGRAMS

### A. A Poorly Functioning Parental Involvement Program — the School District Level

The district's written parental involvement policy is one paragraph which provides that parents shall be afforded the opportunity to participate "in the design, planning, and implementation" of the Chapter 1 program. This involvement is to occur at parent meetings held in the school in the spring and fall of each year.

Although there is a district Parent Advisory Council on paper, none of its members seem to play any role in the Chapter 1 program. In fact, there is little parent involvement in the planning, design, and implementation of the program. No parent workshops have been conducted, nor materials sent home.

### B. A Poorly Functioning Parental Involvement Program — the School Level

The extent of parental involvement in this school's Chapter 1 program is two parent meetings a year. The announcement of the last parent meeting was on the back of an announcement of a school-wide assembly, to which all parents were invited. The meeting was held during the day, which made it difficult for working parents to attend. Two parents did attend. At this meeting, these parents were given a sheet describing Chapter 1, and were asked whether they knew the nature of their own children's reading problems. When they said that they did, the school personnel left the meeting, and the two parents spent the rest of the meeting talking with each other.

### C. A Well-Functioning Parental Involvement Program — the District and School Level

Seven years ago, this school district's parental involvement program had a single parent coordinator funded through Chapter 1. Now it has five parent involvement coordinators and five community aides, funded through a combination of federal and local dollars. The parental involvement program is run by the school district, funded by various sources, and designed to address the parent involvement needs of the entire district. It provides a range of activities to increase parent involvement, improve home-school partnerships, and enhance parents' ability to participate in their children's education.

The district's program involves three core parent involvement activities:

- STEP (Systematic Training for Effective Parenting), and its Spanish version PECES, are commercially available curricula designed to strengthen parenting skills;
- Evening Study Centers offer evening classes twice a week in three school sites for at-risk students and their parents; and
- Group parent meetings on topics such as health, school curriculum, and child development occur throughout the year at each school in the district.

Other broad-based programs and activities also promote parental involvement, while the community aides provide additional services to parents, including home visits. All parents in the district are eligible to participate in some part of the parental involvement program, but Chapter 1 parents are given priority, particularly in the Evening Study Center classes.

Parents also are involved in individual school activities, such as the PTA and grade level meetings. In addition, each school principal is required to develop an annual plan for furthering parent and community involvement objectives at the building level, and the school district has successfully provided support to each school to enable it to carry out this function. It is estimated that through this program over 90% of parents in the district participate in school activities.

### D. A Well-Functioning Parental Involvement Program — the District and School Level

Although in the example above the school district has taken the lead in involving parents, in this example parents of Chapter 1 children have taken the lead in involving themselves.

In this city, parent involvement efforts are spearheaded by a longstanding and very involved Chapter 1 District Parent Advisory Council (DPAC). The DPAC has existed for several decades, has 50-60 active members, and is very involved in the Chapter 1 program. In addition, the city has very active and effective Building Advisory Councils in the schools which are bolstered by the DPAC's work.

The Building Advisory Councils meet frequently among themselves, and hold three meetings a year for the other parents in the school. They meet in September/October with parents to notify them that their children are in the program, to explain the program, and to talk about their advisory role; in January/February with principals and teachers to formulate proposals for the following year; and in May to give parents ideas for helping their children over the summer, provide information on GED activities and other educational opportunities, and to discuss the outcomes of their programmatic recommendations. In addition, every Building Council provides training and other types of workshops for parents, including how to help their children in reading and math, and where to turn for additional help.

In addition, the District Parent Advisory Council plays a role in both designing and monitoring the Chapter 1 programs. Each year, the DPAC receives recommendations from the Building Advisory Councils, and usually holds three to five meetings with the administration to plan the program for the following year. Recently, for example, the parents wanted to have an after-school Chapter 1 math program, but the district did not want it. The district finally agreed to it, however, after five meetings with the DPAC.

On Mondays and Wednesdays, the Chapter 1 parents also conduct monitoring visits to schools, reaching every school before March. During these visits, they talk to the principals, teachers, and other staff, observe classes, raise problems, and provide parents with first hand information about what is going on in their children's schools.

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*Notes*

Example E in Section 1 of this chapter was drawn from: De Baca M.R.C., C. Rinaldi, S.H. Billig, & B.M. Kinnison, "Santo Domingo School: A Rural Schoolwide Project Success," *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis,* Vol. 13, No. 4, pp. 363-368, Winter, 1991.

Example F in Section 1 of this chapter was drawn from: "What are Accelerated Schools?" *Accelerated Schools,* the Newsletter of the Accelerated Schools Project, Center for Educational Research, Stanford University School of Education, Stanford, CA, Vol. 1, No. 1, Winter, 1991; and "The Inquiry Process," *Accelerated Schools,* Vol. 1, No. 3, Summer, 1991.

Example C in Section 2 of this chapter was drawn from: Goodson, B.D., J.P. Swartz, M.A. Millsap, et al., *Working With Families, Promising Programs to Help Parents Support Young Children's Learning,* Final Report, Prepared for the U.S. Department of Education, Abt Associates, Cambridge, MA., Feb., 1991.

## Appendix C

# The Regional Technical Assistance Centers

Below are six regional technical assistance centers and the states that they serve. According to these centers, they can only provide assistance when it is formally requested by a state, school district or school.

**Region A** (Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Rhode Island, Connecticut, Massachusetts, New York, New Jersey, and Puerto Rico)
RMC Research Corporation,
1000 Market Street, Portsmouth, NH 03801
(603) 422-8888; (800) 258-0802

**Region B** (Pennsylvania, West Virginia, Delaware, Maryland, District of Columbia, Kentucky, Indiana, Ohio, and Michigan)
PRC, Inc.
2601 Fortune Circle East, Su. 300A, Indianapolis, IN 46241,
(317) 244-8160; (800) 456-2380

**Region C** (Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, and Florida)
Educational Testing Service
Lakeside Centre, 1979 Lakeside Pkwy, Suite 400, Tucker, GA 30084
(404) 934-0133

**Region D** (North Dakota, South Dakota, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Nebraska, Iowa, Illinois, and Missouri)
Research & Training Associates, Inc.
10950 Grandview, Suite 300, Overland Park, KS 66210
(913) 451-8117; (800) 922-9031

**Region E** (Arkansas, Louisiana, Kansas, Oklahoma, Texas, Colorado, Utah, Arizona, and New Mexico)
RMC Research Corporation
Writer Square, Suite 540, 1512 Larimer Street, Denver, CO 80202
(303) 825-3636; (800) 922-3636

**Region F** (Alaska, Hawaii, Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Montana, Wyoming, Nevada, and California)
Far West Laboratory
730 Harrison Street, San Francisco, CA 94107
(415) 565-3000

# Appendix D

## Special CHAPTER 1 Programs Operated by State Agencies

Part D of the Chapter 1 law includes three programs to be operated by the states.

### A. Programs for Migratory Children

The migrant program supports programs to meet "the special educational needs of children of migratory agricultural workers ... or of migratory fisherman...." Money may be used in the same way as basic Chapter 1 funds, and also to coordinate migratory programs of two or more states, including the transmission of the school records of these children.

Although the states apply for federal funds, services may be provided by employees of the state, a local school district, or a public or private non-profit agency.

As in the regular program, the state's Chapter 1 migrant application must describe "the desired outcomes [of the program] in terms of basic and more advanced skills that participating children are expected to master ...." Also, there must be coordination of the migrant and regular programs, and any other special programs in which migrant students are involved, including special education or limited English proficient programs. There must also be an annual assessment of educational needs. The agency providing services must use information from this assessment and any other information to select the instructional areas and grade levels of the program, and to select the students to participate who have the "greatest need for special assistance."

Parent involvement must also be a central component of the Chapter 1 migrant programs. As in the regular program, service providers must "design and implement" their projects "in consultation with parents to be served...." Chapter 1 migratory programs, however, go further and require that "state and local agencies implementing [full year programs] ... establish a parent advisory council." This council must have a majority of members that are parents (or guardians) of pupils to be served, and, if feasible, these parent members must be elected by other parents.

### B. Programs for Children with Disabilities

Funds under this program are used for disabled school age children, or disabled infants and toddlers. They are youth for whom a state agency is directly responsible for providing services. They must be in (or have been in) a state-operated, or supported program.

Money "shall be used to supplement the provisions of special education and related services for handicapped children ... or early intervention services for handicapped infants and toddlers." Funds may be used for equipment, instructional materials, personnel, training, and outreach activities. Parents of children to be served must be given a chance to participate in the development of a state's application.

### C. Programs for Neglected and Delinquent Children

This program is to help another group of youth whose education is a state responsibility. They are "children in institutions for neglected or delinquent children, children attending community day programs for neglected and delinquent children, or children in adult correctional institutions." The state will serve in this program children up until the age of twenty one.

Funds are used to provide services in addition to "the basic education of such children which must be provided by the state...." Some funds may be used to support programs helping youth move from the state to locally operated programs. As with migratory programs, programs for neglected and delinquent children may be provided by state employees, local school systems, other public agencies, or private non-profit organizations.